THE Mystical Union OF Believers with CHRIST. OR, A TREATISE WHEREIN,

That great Mystery and Priviledge, of *The Saints Union with the Son of God*, is opened; In the *Nature*, *Properties*, and *Necessity* of it. The *way* how it is wrought: And the principal *Scripture-Similitudes* whereby it is illustrated. Together, with a Practical *Application* of the whole

By *Rowland Stedman*, M. A. and Minister of the Gospel (lately) of *Ockingham* in *Berkshire*.

John 14. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Si vis vir virtutis appellari, indue te Christum Dominum qui est Dei virtus, & Dei sapientia: *Et in omnibus adjunge te Domino, ita ut unus cum eo spiritus sit*: Et tunc vir virtutis efficieris. *Orig. hom. in cap. 31. Num.*

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THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

TO

The *truly* Noble, and *worthily* Honoured *Lady*, Dame *Eleanor Roberts* of *Neesdon* in the County of *Middlesex*.

MADAM,

THE *whole* design *of this* Treatise, *and the* Authors ambition *is, that it may become subservient to the good of souls. And in testimony of that* Honour *and* Observance, *which is deservedly due to your* Ladyship *from me, I have taken the liberty to prefix your name unto it. Nor indeed do I know how to make a better return to all your* love *and* respects, *than by presenting and commending these* Evangelical Truths *to your most serious perusal.* Truths *they are, of the* highest im-

portance; *upon the right improvement whereof, lieth the whole stress of a Believers comfort and salvation. If an error be admitted in these things, it may end* (unless timely rectified *in utter and remediless ruine. Let them not be therefore despised, because they tender themselves*, clad in an homely dress. *I am conscious of mine own* weaknesses *and* imperfections: *But our God is pleased to convey the* richest *of his* Treasures, *in* earthen vessels; *and to make use of the meanest Instruments*, that the excellency of the power may appear to be of God, and not of man. *The closer view you take of, and the greater intimacy of acquaintance you get with* these, *and such like* Divine Lessons; *the more* sweet refreshings, *and* soul-satisfaction *will they minister. It is the nature of all* Terrestrials, *to be fairer in* appearance, *than* reality: *and to promise more* at a distance, *than ever is to be found in them. Like the* Apples *of* Sodom, *they seem glorious and beautiful*, when beheld afar off; *but upon a nearer approach*, and handling, *they crumble into dust and rottenness.* Gospel-doctrines *and* excellencies *have a contrary property; like some wholsom herbs, which the more they are pressed, yield the sweeter juice, and are of greater fragrancy. The deeper you draw out of these* Wells of salvation, *the more* Chrystalline, *and* cordial, *will the* waters *be, and contribute more sanative efficacy, to exhilarate and strengthen the*

vital

vital parts. Only be sure to keep the passage open, *and free from* obstructions, *that goeth from the* head *to the* heart *and* conscience; *that the influence of every divine instruction may reach* to the quick.

The main objects *of a Christians care and study, do for the most part, concenter in* three *things.* 1. To make a right choice of the chiefest good, *and pitch upon the* true principal end *of man: which is nothing else, but the* glorifying of God in the enjoyment of him. *This only can allay the hunger and thirst, and satisfie the perplexities of the soul. For,* alas, *what are all created beings, and sublunary vanities, to content the infinite desires, of an immortal spirit? These terrene possessions are only proportionate to the body;* and can the soul feed upon the bodies portion? *'Tis poor support can be drawn from the abundance of this world, when the spirit is departing, to enter into an endless eternity.* 2. To select and determine upon the sure means, *in order to the compassing of that end. And this is only* the righteousness of Jesus Christ; *applyed and made over to us, by vertue of* our union with him; *to be sought after in the waves* of Gods institution; *and evidenced by the* holiness *of our conversations.* 3. *The* sincere, spiritual, *and* vigorous pursuance of such means. *And, I hope, your* Ladyship *will find, in the reading of this Book, what may be of special use, to direct*

rect and quicken, in each of these: *But* more directly, *in relation to the* two latter. *It is matter of sad lamentation and sorrow, to behold how many, that go under the name of* Christians, *do miserably faulter in these* so weighty *affairs. The multitude do little else, but* labour in the fire, for very vanity: *And such as are,* some times *at leisure, to think of their souls, do for the most part but study to find out the* easiest *and* cheapest *course, a little to* palliate *and* skin over *those* wounds *and* grievances, *which the Apostacy of man hath brought upon them: without endeavouring after* a perfect cure. *Your* Ladyship *hath learnt better: Not only to give soul-affairs the* preheminence; *but likewise to know, how needful it is, to be* intent, *and* industrious, *in the business of salvation; and of what dangerous consequence, to do that work* by halfs. *It is not my meaning to trouble you with a large* preambulatory discourse. *Neither is it my way, nor doth your* Ladyship *expect it, that I should stuff up this* Address *with your commendations.* They who most deserve, least desire to hear their own praises. *You know to whose judgment, you stand or fall.* My design is, *only to incourage your* Ladyship *to hold on, and to be faithful, in the good wayes of the Lord, wherein you are ingaged.* That our gracious God may preserve you, to be a continued comfort to your Relations, and to be further useful in your Place and Station:

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That he may mercifully please to grant you divine assistance and counsel upon all occasions, for the right ordering your affairs, with Christian sincerity and prudence: That his blessing may be upon you, during your abode on the earth, in your Person, Family, and every concernment: And that you may have real comfort, in the day of the resignation of your spirit into the hands of God that gave it, is *the unfeigned prayer of*

23. *July*, 1668. *Your* Ladyships *much obliged Servant*

ROWLAND STEDMAN.

To my dearly beloved *Friends*, The Inhabitants of the *Town* and *Parish* of *Wockingham*, in the Counties of *Berks* and *Wilts*.

WITH a special respect to the furtherance of your eternal welfare, I have suffered these ensuing *Meditations*, to see the *light*. For since it pleased the Lord (at whose disposal are our persons, liberties, and every concernment) by his *righteous providence*, to cause me to be separated from you: I have often consulted within my self, how I might be most instrumental to do you service, as to your *soul-affairs*. Which, *at this local distance*, I knew not how better to accomplish, than by commending to you such *spiritual Lessons*, as may be ready at hand, upon all occasions, for your *guidance*, and *direction*, in the way to heaven. If *Truth* (as * one saith) is of the number of the greatest gifts, which the God

* Ουδὲν ἀνθρώπῳ λαβεῖν μεῖζον, ἢ χαρίζεσθαι, θεῷ σεμνότερον Αληθείας. *Plut.*

of

of heaven could confer on the children of men, or they are capable of receiving from the Lord of glory: And if *those Truths* are most worthy of all acceptation, which are, *in their own nature* and *tendency*, of the greatest weight and importance: Then, *I hope*, I may justly expect your loving *Reception*, and diligent *Perusal* of these *Divine Instructions*. Especially, when I call to remembrance *your fervent mind*, and more than usual *respect*, which many of you have formerly expressed towards me. If I detain you longer than is customable, *by way of Preface*; impute it wholly to the earnestness of my desires, of being useful to the promoting your everlasting salvation. For I can truly say, that since my removal from amongst you, I have had you *frequently* in my thoughts, *much* in my affections, and *fervently* in my Prayers.

Give me leave to be your *Remembrancer*, That you are a people under manifold *Obligations* and *Ingagements*, to serve the Lord, and to stick fast unto his testimonies.

1. You have, *some of you*, for a long time, made a Profession of Godliness; and openly avowed your selves to be the servants of the most High. And will you not labour, to walk answerably to that Vocation wherewith ye are called? *If the Principles you own be good,*

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they ought to be practised: And if they be evil, why are they professed? When King *Alexander* had a cowardly Souldier, of his own name, he is reported to have called him aside, and thus to have spoken to him; *Friend, either change thy name, or leave thy comardise.* The like may be fitly said to Professors of Religion; *Either shewforth the power of godliness in your lives, or do not take upon you the profession of Godliness. Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, if ye do not the things which I say? Luk. 6.46.*

2. You are, *many of you*, (I am apt to think) a people under convictions. The clear light of the Gospel which hath shined amongst you, hath left, *at least*, such impressions on your spirits, *That you cannot but approve the things that are excellent.* You cannot but acknowledge the wayes of God to be right, and the service of sin to be abominable. Ask your consciences (to whom I appeal in this case) *if it be not thus.* So that I may speak to you, as the Apostle *Paul* to the King, *Act. 26.27. King* Agrippa, *Believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest. My brethren, Do you believe* the absolute necessity, and incomparable worth of Holiness? *Do you believe*, That the fear of the Lord is the best wisdom, and the favour of God the chiefest portion? That *Godliness* is great gain, and ought to have the *supremacy* and *preheminence* above all worldly enjoyments?

ments? *Do you believe*, that the pleasures of sin are folly and madness; and will end at length in everlasting destruction? *I am persuaded, many of you believe it.* Now, *Sirs*, it is a dreadful thing to sin against convictions; to disown that in your *conversations*, which you subscribe to in your *consciences*. *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth*, Rom. 14. 22. *To him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin*, Jam. 4. 17.

3. You are, *most of you*, a people of low estate, and poor in the world. And will you not secure an interest *in the true riches*? If you have little, or no, treasures upon earth; should it not quicken you to be the more industrious *to lay up treasures in heaven*; that you may not be poor in every respect? When Bishop *Hooper* (as I remember) was led to his *Martyrdom*, there came to meet him a poor boy, that was blind, but had received the knowledge of the truth: To whom the *Martyr* spake to this effect; *See to it that you continue to serve the Lord, and that you lose not the knowledge of God; for then thou wouldest be blinde both in soul and body.* So let me say to those of this rank amongst you; *Well is it, if you have chosen the good part, which cannot be taken away; if you have in heaven, an enduring substance: else you are poor, both in this world, and in relation to that*

which

which is to come. Study to shew your selves, men and women approved of God, that it may appear, you are of the number of those whom the Apostle *James* makes mention of, Chap. 2. 5. *Whom God hath chosen, the poor of this world, but rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him.*

4. You are, *all of you,* a people of signal and eminent mercies. And if the mercy of God rise up in judgment against you, *what will be able to plead for you?* If mercy condemn you, how sore will be your condemnation? Will ye trample upon the bowels of the compassion of God? And tread under foot his loving kindness? *Deut. 32. 6, Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is he not thy father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee?* I will not multiply the mention of *Particulars*: only there are *two mercies* principally, come at present into my thoughts; which I would have you never to forget.

1. Remember the dayes of old, consider the years of some generations at the least: Ask your Fathers, and they will tell it; your Elders, and they will shew it, *That you have been remarkably blessed with Gospel-priviledges, and advantages for attendance upon God, and communion with him.* You have had, for some good

good while together, *a succession of faithful and painful Ministers*, who rightly divided the word of Truth. When some other places were, comparatively, in darkness; you dwelt in *Goshen*, a place of light. Keep therefore *an holy suspicion* and *jealousie* over your hearts and lives, lest you be found guilty of *receiving the grace of God in vain*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. And to that end, let me beseech you often to read, and meditate with *seriousness*, and *self-application* upon, these awakening Texts, *Mat.* 11. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4, 5, 6.

2. *Consult your late experiences of the goodness of God. That* was a special preservation, which I would have you to keep fresh in your *Memories*, and constantly to retain the sense of it, upon your *hearts: When it pleased the Lord, in the late dreadful year, to contend with the Nation, by the destroying Pestilence, you were as a fire-brand plucht out of the burning.* You were exposed to the *contagion*, as well as other places where it violently raged. *Nay*, more, upon several accounts, than some other *Towns*, which it laid almost desolate. And the Lord was pleased only to give you thereby, *an awakening call to Repentance*; and to suffer the destroying Angel to proceed no further. One house amongst you was infected, and it swept away all that dwelt therein: And a stop was immediately put to the further progress of it.

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Correcting providences, and *gracious deliverances, have both of them a Teaching vertue.* They are *the voice of the Lord*, whereby he crieth *aloud*, unto the children of men, *Mic. 6. 9. Amos 4. 10, 11.* And this *dispensation* which I am calling back to your remembrance, being *a Judgment* allayed with *the mixture* of *abundant mercy*, seemed in my apprehension, to speak thus much unto you: As if the Lord had said, *This people are in the way of declining apace from me, and begin to lose the sense of the* Gospel doctrines, *wherein they have been taught: And therefore I might justly break in upon them in wrath, and consume them with a sore destruction. But how shall I give them up to utter ruine and desolation? How shall I lay them waste, and make them as* Admah *and* Zeboim? *My bowels are turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger: I will yet grant them some deliverance: I will wait upon them a while further, that I may be gracious unto them. I will see what their end will be, what use they will make of this eminent deliverance.* My Brethren, *I question not*, but there are many amongst you, that *truly* fear the name of the Lord: And *of the rest* I speak, *not to shame* or *accuse*; But as my dearly beloved friends, I *warn* and *admonish*. And I expect your pardon, for dealing thus plainly; for if you would have me for your *Friend*, you cannot

* *Idem non potest esse amicus & adulator.*

cannot rationally expect, that I should be * your *Flatterer*. Take heed therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of by the Prophet *Esaias*, *Chap.* 5. 4, 5, 6. *What could have been done more to my vineyard; that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wilde grapes? And now, Go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be troden down. And I will lay it waste, it shall not be pruned nor digged: but there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it.* You may now expect *to be dismissed*. But before I conclude this *Epistle*, give me leave to press upon you a few *general Scripture-rules*. The Lord cause them to work efficaciously upon your spirits.

1. *Take heed of resting in a formal course of Religion, and of fancying to your selves an easie way to salvation.* But get through convictions upon your hearts, of the necessitie of making it *your* very *business* to walk with God, and of acting with *vigour* and *industry*, in laying hold on eternal life. *Lazy wishes*, and *faint desires*, an *empty name* and *profession*, and a bare keeping *the round of some outward duties*, will never bring you into the glorious presence of

God.

God. *Formality and lukewarmness will no sooner get to heaven, than downright Atheism and profaneſs.* If *you* will be ſaved, *you* muſt not only ſeek, but *ſtrive* (*you* muſt put *your ſelves*, as it were, into an *Agony* with ſtriving *) *to enter in at the ſtrait gate*, Luke 13. 24. You may be brought into thoſe ſtreights, that if *you* will keep *a good conſcience*, *you* ſhall keep *nothing but a good conſcience*: And if *ye* will ſave *your ſouls*, *you* ſhall ſave *nothing but your ſouls*, Mark 8. 34, 35. And can this be done with a wet finger? Is it an eaſie thing to bring *your hearts* into a willingneſs to forſake all that *you* have for Chriſt? If *you* will enter into life, *you* muſt walk *in a contradiction to the generality of the world*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. *Rom.* 12. 2. You muſt watch, and ſtand faſt againſt all ſorts of ſollicitations unto ſin, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. You muſt not content *your ſelves* with the *external performance* of duties, but be *ſpiritual and fervent* in the performance of them, *Iſa.* 64. 7. *Jude* 3. *The kingdom of heaven ſuffereth violence*, Mat. 11. 12. *And every man preſſeth into it*; i.e. *Every one* that doth ſavingly cloſe with it, *every one* that gets a real intereſt therein, *every one* that will not fall ſhort of the grace offered thereby, *Luke* 16. 16. So that, if *you* will work out your ſalvation *ſucceſsfully*, *you* muſt

* Ἀγωνίζεσθε.

act *forcibly*. The height of *security* and *wickedness* in the heart of a sinner, usually entereth in at this door, of *slightness* and *formality* in the service * of God. When persons are negligent and *superficial in duty*, they will quickly make *no conscience of duty*; and at length forget that there is a God to be served, or immortal souls to be regarded, *Prov.* 19. 15. 2 *Tim.* 3. 13.

* *Nemo repente fit turpissimus.*

2. *If you will act to purpose, in working out your salvation, you must set upon the prosecution of that design, with the full purpose of your hearts.* If *you* will follow the Lord *fully*, *you* must walk *resolvedly*. That's the way, *to resist the devil*, that he may flee from *you*: and to break through all *impediments*, and *aversions*, that they may not turn *you* aside. *A double-minded man* is both *unstable* and *slothful* in all his waies. 'Tis a setled resolution, that *strengthens the spirit* under pressures, *fortifieth the soul* against difficulties, and makes it *unmoveable as a Rock*, that nothing shall prevail to the alteration of his course. Let me give *you* the exhortation of *Barnabas*, Act. 23. *That with purpose of heart, you cleave unto the Lord.* Say, every one of *you*, as *Joshua*, Chap. 24. 15. *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. The God of heaven we will adore, and his Statutes we will keep: His Ordinances we will observe, and the*

the wayes of holiness we will own, whatever cometh of it. To this end, consider often the absolute necessity of making *your* peace with God, and walking before him in the integrity of *your* hearts. *If you trifle in this business, you are undone for ever.* And bethink *your* selves, how *obstinately the wicked are bent*, upon the satisfaction of their lusts; and will not *you* be *as peremptorily fixed*, upon the saving of *your souls? That's* an excellent *Copy*, to transcribe in *your practise*, Mic. 4. 5. *For all people will walk, every one in the name of his God: and we will walk in the name of* Jehovah *our God, for ever and ever.*

3. *Be sure to get your understandings and judgments rightly principled, with* distinct *knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospel.* As there can be no *saving* grace in the heart, without a *competent* knowledge of the principles of Religion: So it is hardly to be imagined what abundant mischiefs do arise (as to *errors* in the mind, *disorders* in the conversation, and *deprivement of comfort* in the soul) for want of a *distinct* knowledge of those principles. *Ignorance is vertually any evil whatsoever.* The understanding is the *gate* of entrance into the soul; and the other faculties depend, in all their *regular operations*, upon the guidance of the understanding. So that, *if the light that is within you be darkness, how great is that darkness?* If it be

dim and cloudy, how easily will *you* be carried into innumerable mistakes? *Let the word of Christ* therefore *dwell in you richly, in all wisdom*, *Col.* 3. 16. And whatever truths *you* learn, let it ever be with a personal appropriation unto your own hearts and consciences. One plain truth *closely* * *applyed to the heart*, will be of more advantage, to help you forward in your journey towards *Canaan*, than multitudes of notions, that lie *only floating in the head*, and do not descend with energy, upon the conscience. *Job* 5. 27. *Lo this, We have searched it, so it is: hear it, and know thou it for thy self.*

* *In absoluto, & facili stat aeternitas.*

4. *Labour, what in you lieth, to edulce and sweeten the way of God to your selves.* Be not alwaies poring upon the *black* and *dark* side of Religion; but take a frequent view of it, *in its beauty* and *pleasantness*. When people fancy Religion to be a *sad* and *melancholy way*; and think of nothing but the *sorrows* and *severities* of it; their spirits are apt to hang off, and are hardly wrought to any cordial compliance. *So that*, study much the *loveliness* and *amiableness* of it, and take a daily prospect of the *bright side* of godliness, *Prov.* 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise*

chandise of silver, and the gain thereof, than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of dayes is in her right hand, and in her left hand, riches and honour. Her wayes are wayes of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life, to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her. This was the very course that *David* took, which made his soul to follow hard after God, and even to break *with longings* for the enjoyment of him, *Psal.* 63. 1, 3, 5, 8. And to this purpose, observe these ensuing Directions, (1.) *Look upon the word of precept in a continual conjunction with the word of promise.* If sinners did not separate between the *Prohibition*, and the *Commination*: If they did joyn the *sin forbidden*, with the *judgment threatned*, it would help to imbitter the waies of sin. And if the people of God did contemplate the *command*, as it is linkt with the *Promise*, it would notably sweeten the course of obedience, *Heb.* 10. 23. 2 *Cor.* 6. 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. (2.) *Be much looking within the vail.* Live in a constant meditation upon the crown of Righteousness: And have a due respect to the recompence of reward. *Are there difficulties in the way?* The kingdom of heaven *will make amends for all. If the wicked

* *Optanda est jactura, quæ lucro majore compensatur.*

did live in the apprehensions of *Hell*, it would make the path of ungodliness as bitter as *gall* and *wormwood*. And therefore, that they may take their swinge, they cast off these thoughts, *Prov.* 9. 17, 18. *Psal.* 10. 4, 5. *So*, if the righteous did live in the meditation of *Heaven*, it would put sweetness into the way of righteousness, *Heb.* 10. 34, 35. *Heb.* 11. 26. 2 *Cor.* 4. 16, 17, 18. (3.) *Often bethink your selves, what comfortable lives you might lead, during your pilgrimage upon earth; if you had good assurance of the love of God towards you, and did study to* approve your selves in sincerity unto him.* With what sweet serenity and peace of spirit, might *you enjoy your comforts*, and *perform all your undertakings*, as knowing your selves to be under the blessing and protection *of the Lord of hosts, who dwelleth between the Cherubims, i. e.* of that infinite Being, whose *power* and *mercy* are united * for the defence of his children? How cheerful might you be *in times of affliction and trouble*, as knowing that all things should conspire to the advancement of your welfare? You need not then be afraid of any terror or amazement, *Prov.* 3. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. *My Son, let them not depart from thine*

* *Hilaritatis nostræ omnis rivulus, de fonte ducendus pietatis.*

* 2 *Sam.* 6. 2. The mercy-seat was placed between the Cherubims.

thine eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion. So shall they be life to thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. Be not afraid [*i. e.* Thou needest not be afraid*, there is no cause to be afraid] *of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.* Read *Job* 11. from *v.* 13. to *v.* 19. And *Psal.* 34. 12, 13. But I must contract my thoughts, lest I should far exceed the intended bounds.

Utuntur Hebræi imperativo in promissionibus ut שְׁמֹר מִצְוֹתַי וְחְיֵה *custodi præcepta mea & vive. i. e.* vives. *Sic, Ne timeto. i. e* non timebis.

5. *Endeavour to be best, in the worst times.* And *think not the worse of Religion, because it is despised and set against.* It is condemned indeed *of pride* and *humour*; of *faction, sedition,* and *turbulency.* But who are the persons by whom it is evil spoken of, *but men of corrupt minds,* and *destitute of the truth?* who have deeply wounded their consciences, by sins against light and knowledge, and given the victory to their fleshly lusts? Therefore they condemn the fear of the Lord, and the strict waies of holiness; lest otherwise they should accuse and condemn themselves. And will a

Traveller be turned out of his *road*, because of some *Dogs* and *Curs*, that bark at him? If you believe the Scriptures, it is an excellent branch of *humility*, to be subject unto the Lord; and the greatest *pride* imaginable, for poor *Earth-worms* to rise up against the *most High*, *Jer.* 43. 2, *Neh.* 9. 16. 1 *Tim.* 6. 3. The Saints of God are *the best subjects* in a state, who yield obedience in things agreeable to the will of God, *not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake*: And pray for Kings, and for all that are in authority, *that they may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. Religion *otherwhile* is condemned of *folly*; But it will shortly be found to be a point of the *highest wisdom*, *Eph.* 5. 15, 16. *Job* 28. 28. *Psal.* 111. 10. *That* is a considerable passage in the *Apocryphal* writings, *Wisd.* 5. 4. *Then shall the righteous man stand with great boldness, before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all they looked for. And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves: This is he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered amongst the children of God?*

and

and his lot is amongst the Saints. As for the *oppositions* you meet with, the word of God is evidently fulfilled in them, before *your faces:* And they are none other, than *you* were warned to expect, *Act.* 14. 22. 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. Besides, *It is but yet a little while,* * *and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry,* Heb. 10. 37.

* *Nubecula est, cito pertransibit.*

6. *According to your several abilities, set up the worship of God in your families. And be conscientious and strict in sanctification of the Sabbath, the Lords day.* It is a matter *of easie observation,* That where *these two* are neglected, or slightly managed, the fairest profession of godliness is *quickly shriveled,* and *withereth away.* Never plead, *that you have no parts, or ability, for these things.* If *you* will set upon the discharge *of your duty,* in the integrity *of your hearts,* God will meet *you* therein, and graciously assist *you* unto the performance, *Psal.* 27. 14. And *if there be* [indeed] *first a willing mind* [which willingness is manifested by vigorous and earnest indeavours] *it is accepted, according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not,* 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. See *Gen.* 35. 2, 3. *Josh.* 24. 15. *Psal.* 101. *Jer.* 10. 25. *Isa.* 56. 2, 4, 5. *Isa.* 58. 13, 14.

7. *Be constant and diligent in the duty of prayer.* That is one of the special waies, whereby

by a *fellowship* and *correspondency* is maintained, between God and his people. *In taking counsel of the word*, we hear what the Lord is pleased to speak unto us: And *by the exercise of the grace of supplications*, we have the liberty given us to speak unto the Lord. And remember what hath often been inculcated upon you, *That as all sorts of blessings are stored up in the promises*, so *Faith* and *Prayer are the special means, which God hath appointed for the fulfilling and accomplishment of all his promises, Jer.* 29. 11, 12, 13. *Psal.* 10. 14. As *you* cannot comfortably expect, that God should preserve and keep *you* from the *pollution of sin*, unless *you* be careful to avoid the *occasions of sin*: So *on the other hand*, You cannot rationally expect to receive mercies from the Lord, unless you seek unto him *by prayer*, for the obtaining of *mercy*. *Aik, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you, Mat.*7.7. *Philip.*4.6,7. *Eph.*6.18,19.

8. *Live in the daily contemplations of eternity, and of the uncertainty of the time of your continuance here.* Study how *you* may subordinate all your affairs and concernments in this world, unto the matters of another world. Put *an estimate* upon all things, as they have reference thereunto. Often say within your selves, *What evidence have I, to prove my interest in God? What are the grounds, whereupon I look for eter-*

nal

nal life? What thoughts am I likely to entertain of sin, and the world, on the one hand; *and of conformity to Christ* on the other hand, *when I am to depart hence, and shall be seen no more? How precious will that time and space of repentance then be, which now I am ready to squander away upon trifles? What answer shall I be able to make, when God visiteth; for the filling up of my Relations; for the management of the Talents, wherewith I have been intrusted; for the right improvement of the means of grace, which I have enjoyed; for all the particulars of my conversation in the world?* Did you frequently press *these*, and such like *considerations* home upon *your spirits*, and keep them *close*, and *warm*, by *meditation*, upon *your hearts*, what manner of persons would you be in all sobriety, holiness, and righteousness? *My brethren*, You know not how soon, how unexpectedly, you may be summoned to the giving up *your accounts*: And it infinitely concerns *you* to be in a readiness, That *you* may be found of God in peace. *Boast not thy self of To morrow: for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth, Prov. 27. 1.*

9. *Beware* therefore *of procrastinating in the business of providing for your immortal souls.* It is one of the principal snares of the devil, whereby he holds sinners fast, in their spiritual bondage, and captivity, unto their final destruction.

ſtruction. If therefore you would ſet *effectually* upon working out *your ſalvation*, ingage *ſpeedily, preſently*, in the work; without further delay. Give not place to the devil. *Deliver thy ſelf, as a Roe from the hand of the hunter: and as a bird from the ſnare of the fowler. Give not ſleep to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye lids*, Pſal. 119. 6. *Heb.* 3. 7. 2 *Cor.* 6. 1, 2.

And now I ſhall trouble *you* no further with this *preliminary* diſcourſe: But conclude with *my unfeigned Prayers*, for you all. *That the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the Infinite, Eternal, and Almighty God; and the only Redeemer of loſt ſinners: The love of God, our Father in him, who ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up unto death: And the ſweet and comfortable Preſence, Guidance, and Communion of the holy Ghoſt, the ſame Infinite, Incomprehenſible, and Immortal God, the Spirit of Grace and Truth: The Sanctifying, Aſſiſting, Quickning, Comforting, and preſerving preſence of that Spirit, may be with you, and amongſt you: To inable you unto your duties, To keep you againſt Temptations, To ſupport you under Burdens, To carry you through difficulties, To ſtrengthen your weakneſſes, and plentifully to ſupply all your wants: That you may walk wiſely in your Families, ſpiritually in your Cloſets, ſoberly in your companies, and Chriſtianly in all your converſations: So as to write* Holineſs

to

to the Lord, *upon every of your undertakings: That upon all occasions you may be effectually instructed in the will of the Lord, and bring forth his word into practise: That you may thereby witness your Union with Christ, and be rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith: And so the Blessing of God may be your constant portion here, and you may be everlastingly blessed, in the glorious presence of God, hereafter.* Amen.

23. July. 1668.

Written by one, who *truly* and *affectionately* desireth your Edification and Salvation.

ROWLAND STEDMAN.

To

To the READER.

IT *may be interpreted* by some (*to whom I am best known*) *not only* as a defect in prudence, *but a doing violence, and treading counter to my* personal inclination (*who have always affected the* privacy *of Retirement*) *thus to appear* in publike; *and consequently to expose my* Sentiments *in the matters of* Religion, *to the* censure *of all sorts of persons, who may light upon* this Book. *To whom therefore I owe* this account *of my Studies, and* the publication *thereof. Having often, in the course of my* Ministery, *pressed the necessity of* Union with Christ, *in order to the partaking of the benefits of* Redemption: *I was, a while since, intreated by letter from some, that I would further instruct them, in the nature of that* Mystery, *of* Union with the Son of God. *With the proposal of this spiritual and useful enquiry, and the sundry particulars relating thereunto, wherein they desired information, I was,* not a little, *well pleased: knowing how usual it is, with many Professors of Godliness, to leave the* kernel *and* marrow *of Christianity, wherein the* life *and* sweetness *of it lieth; and to exercise themselves about the* shell, *and* bones *only of* contention: *As if they had been brought up at the feet of those* Schoolmen, *who turn* Religion *into* Quodlibets, *and make it little else, but a* well-digested

* *Statum latessunt omnipotentis Dei,*
Calumniosis litibus.
Fidem minutis dissecant ambagibus
Ut quisque est lingua nequior.
Solvunt ligantque quæstionem vincula
Per syllogismos plectiles.

gested heap *of intricate* * *and doubtful* disputations. *To those savoury questions, I returned* answer, *as he* that ministers seed to the sower, *was pleased to give ability: and as might be contained within the compass of one* sheet *at the most. Which* answer *I intended but* as a compounding for forbearance, *till I should be ready to give* fuller satisfaction. *For I found within my self a strong* propension of spirit, *upon the first motion of it to me, to wait upon God, in the deligent search of the Scripture, for* a more thorow insight *into that* great Gospel-doctrine. *When my* Meditations *were digested into this* method *and* frame, *according to the following* Treatise; *I was perswaded to believe, That I could not be better serviceable, to the souls of many of my dear friends, from whom the Lord hath suffered me to be rent, then by commending* these plain Truths *to their most serious study. And I think,* I may be assured, *That many amongst them, who have loved the* Author *for the* Truths sake, *will be no whit the more averse, from a sedulous enquiry into* these Truths, *for the* Authors sake.

For the Subject matter, *it needs no Apology (being one of the* Highest, *and yet* most necessary, *Points of* Christian *instruction) unless it be for this, That so mean a person, as my self, hath attempted the handling of it. To which I shall say with* Minutius Felix. Nihil indignandum vel dolendum, si quicunque de divinis quærat, sentiat, proferat? Cum non disputantis Authoritas, sed disputationis ipsius veritas requiratur. Atque etiam quo imperitior sermo, hoc

hoc illustrior ratio est: Quoniam non fucatur pompa facundiæ, & gratiæ; sed ut est recti regula sustinetur.

All the perversion *in humane affairs, and* disorders *in the spirits of the children of men, do arise (according to the observation of* Augustine*) from a* two-fold *Original.* * 1. The enjoying of what should only be used. *And* 2. The using of that, which ought to be enjoyed. *By giving that place to the* creatures, *which is only due to the* God of heaven; *and making use of the Lord, and his service,* in a subordination *and* subserviency *to other ends. Our great work therefore consists,* in referring all things to their proper places, *and restoring them to their* appointed stations, *according to the eternal Law.* To use the things of this world, as not abusing them; *and* to make God alone the object of our enjoyment. *This enjoyment of God,* since the fall of man, *is only attainable through Jesus Christ,* the Mediator: *And there is no fellowship to be maintained with God through Christ, but only by such as are in Christ. And this is the* scope *and* drift *of the* Tract *ensuing,* so to manuduct and lead sinners unto the Son, That, being knit unto him, they may thence be conducted into the bosom of the Father. *And I suppose, If a just reckoning be made, of such as have* designedly *dealt upon this Subject,* of a Believers Union with Christ, *considering how many have write upon some others, this* Book *need not be accounted as* supernumerary.

* *Cum fruimur utendis, & utimur fruendis.*

If any be offended with the meanes of the stile, *and for want of such embellishments of* Rhetorick *and* History, *wherewith it might have been adorned; or*

that I have sometimes descended too low, *in the explication and proof of such matters, as seem not to require it*; Let such please to take notice, *That my intent was* (it possible) *to speak to the capacity* of the meanest. *I have often thought of Mr.* Dod's *observation*, That most Ministers in *England* are wont to shoot over the peoples heads. *Rather would I utter the* plainest Truths, *to the understanding and edification of the* weakest Christians; *than study to feed more* curious fancies, *with sublimer* notions *and* niceties *. *And as for* ringing changes upon words, and the counter-marching of sentences (*as one speaketh*) *they may pass for* wit *and* elegancy *with some; but contribute nothing to the nourishment of the* vitals *of* Christianity. *I have purposely declined all* controversal points, *for that I would not scratch the* * *Itch of any, in this litigious generation.* Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another. *What is found to be agreeable to the mind of God, and the tenour of the everlasting Gospel, let it be received and embraced in the love of it: And pardon the defectiveness of the* Author, *in the management of the whole. I dare not say as* Cicero, *who was confident*, Se nullum verbum, quod revocare vellet, emisisse. *Yet I may truly speak, as another*: Ego omnia quæ dixi, bona fide, sine ullo studio contentionis, sine aliqua dubitatione veritatis, sine aliquo præjudicio diligentioris Tractatus, exposui.

* *Dissoluti est pectoris sonos auribus infundere dulciores, non medicinam vulneribus adhibere.* Arnob.

* *Disputandi pruritus est Ecclesiarum scabies.* Wotton. Plaus. & Vot.

R. S.

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CHAP. 1. *The Context opened, the Text explained, and the Point of Doctrine deduced.*

IT hath been well observed in the case of *Moral Prudence*, that many never attained to be wise indeed, because hindred in the pursuit by an over-weaning conceit of their own Wisdom. The like may be truly said of the *favor of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven*; Multitudes have fallen short of eternal Life, by an over-confident opinion of their interest in it. Presumption of finding Mercy with the Lord, is one of the principal snares of the Devil, whereby sinners are held fast in their impenitence. This presumption for the most part, is wont to spring from a twofold Fountain.

Multi ad sapientiam pervenissent, nisi putassent se pervenisse. Sen.

Qui jugum suscipiunt Diaboli, Diabolus eos delectat & decipit, ne discedant à malo impii usque ad mortem suam.

1. *Ignorance and misapprehension of the mercy of God.*

2. *Mis-*

2. *Misapplication of the death and righteousness of Christ.*

I shall endeavor, through Divine assistance, to contribute a little help against the spreading of this evil, and towards the drying up of these poysonous Fountains, which have caused the death and ruine of many thousand Souls. This I shall do, 1. By Shewing the necessity of the Mediation and Righteousness of Christ, to procure saving Grace for lost sinners. 2. By discovering the like absolute necessity of our Union with Christ, in order to partaking of that righteousness, and receiving the grace which he hath purchased thereby. Both these are fully comprised in the Text. I shall only touch *occasionally* upon the *first*, as it will fall in the way of my insisting *designedly* upon the latter.

Satan is not willing to deal roughly with the unregenerate, if he could chuse, for he stands ever in most danger of losing them, when he carrieth himself towards them in so hard a fashion: Wherefore he rather flatters and fawns; endeavoring to rock them asleep still, if he can, in the Cradle of security and presumption. *Whately's New Birth.*

This portion of Scripture (which I have chosen as the *basis or subject* of the following Meditations) may not unfitly be stiled *An Abstract or Epitome of the Gospel of Christ*, whereby life and immortality is brought to light; wherein the way is revealed for restoring fallen sinners to their primitive happiness, or conducting souls to everlasting bliss. God hath graciously pleased to declare this way by the Scriptures, and to leave it upon record in the Word of the Gospel; and here we have the *substance* or *summary* of that Record, *viz. That God is the giver of eternal Life, and that this life is in his Son, &c.*

If you examine the *connexion or dependance*, which the

the words of the Text have with and upon the foregoing passages of the Chapter; You will evidently find, our Apostle is herein giving a succinct account of the *great foundation-truths*, which are proposed to be the object of a Christians Faith, by closing with which we do eminently and signally advance the glory of God, and by disbelieving whereof, we are said to make him a lyar. Our faith is to be built upon the word of the Lord, to be bottomed upon the Record which God hath given concerning his Son: And this (*saith the Apostle*) is the Record, *That God hath given us eternal Life, &c.*

The better to clear this coherence, and so the genuine import and scope of these words; let us a little cast our eyes back upon the context, or the verse immediately preceding the Text: wherein we may note two things.

1. *The nature and excellency of the grace of faith*, or believing on Christ, ver. 10. former part, *He that believeth on the Son, hath the witness in himself.*

1. *For the nature of Faith*, it is a believing on the Son; so it is usually set forth in the dialect of the Holy Ghost, *Act.* 16. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thine house.* Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life.* This is the saving act of Faith which will bring a soul to Heaven, *a believing on the Son.* And therefore I might touch by the way, on that common distinction as useful to be considered; that there is a threefold act of Faith, or three waies of Believing in reference unto Christ.

There is a believing, { 1. That Jesus is the Christ. 2. Jesus Christ. 3. On the Lord Jesus Christ.

Credere { *Christum.* *Christo.* *In Christum*

1. There is a *believing that Jesus is the Christ*; an assent unto the truth of this principle, that he who was born of the Virgin *Mary*, is the true Messiah and Mediator, sent of God to be the Saviour of Mankind: So the very Devils believe. As they know there is one God, so they acknowledg this principle, that Jesus is the Son of God, and the only Redeemer of lost sinners. Hence it is that they are so unwearied in their endeavors, to hinder poor souls in closing with Christ; and that they labour by all manner of false suggestions to draw their affections from the Lord Jesus, *Mark* 1. 24. *The unclean spirit cried out, Let us alone thou Jesus of Nazareth, I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God.* And that herein the Father of lies spake the very truth, you will find by the testimony of the Spirit of God himself, v. 34. *He cast out many Devils, and suffered not the Devils to speak, because they knew him.*

2. There is a *Believing Jesus Christ, i. e.* a subscribing to the truth of the Doctrines that he delivered, which are contained in the Scriptures, the Word of Christ, and Preached by Ministers of the Gospel in his name. Thus a *Simon Magus* may believe, he may own the verity of Christs Word, though in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, *Acts* 8. 12, 13. *When they believed* Philip *Preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ, then* Simon *himself believed also.* Thus *Nicodemus* believed, before he was instructed in the necessity, or acquainted with the grace of regeneration: he was convinced by the Miracles wrought by Christ, that he was a teacher sent of God; and *consequently*, that the Doctrines which he taught, were the truths of God, *Joh.* 3. 2. As a carnal person who never tasted of saving

ving grace, may have much knowledg in his understanding of the will of Christ; so he may be under such convictions upon his judgment, as in a sort to approve the Word of Christ, *Rom* 2.17.18.

3. But lastly, there is a *believing on the Lord Jesus.* When a man is so powerfully convinced of the evil of sin, and his own obnoxiousness to the wrath of God; and the heart so fully perswaded of the excellency of Christ, and the sufficiency of his Righteousness; together with the utter insufficiency of all other wayes of deliverance; that thereupon he doth actually close with Christ upon Gospel terms, and make application to him, casting himself upon the Son of God for Salvation, and renouncing all things for the enjoyment of him. This is the saving act of Faith, *Believing on, or in the Son* Joh. 11.25, 26. *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet he shall live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never dye.* For *mark it Sirs*, that assent of the Judgment unto the great truths of the Gospel, which is required of the Lord, and is well pleasing in his sight, is not a bare *naked, lifeless* assent; but a *compounded* and *operative* assent; such as doth ingage the heart to comply with those truths, and brings the whole Soul in subjection unto them, *Rom.* 10.10. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.*

Although believing on Christ doth not always signify a saving faith (as, see *Joh.* 2.23) yet for the most part it doth; and so may fitly be made use of, by way of distinction. It being observed by some, that πιστευειν is a phrase peculiar to the Holy Ghost, and not used by prophane Authors.

Faith.

Thats for the nature of Faith, It is a believing on the Son.

2. For the *excellency and preciousness* of thus believing; He that doth so, hath the witness in himself] *i. e.* in his own Soul and Spirit and Conscience. He hath it graven upon the very tables of his heart. But what is this witness which a Believer hath in himself? *Answ.* You may understand it either of these three waies.

1. In relation to his spiritual state. He hath a fundamental evidence that he is a child of God, and in covenant with him; here is sufficient matter, if rightly improved, whereupon to raise a testimony of this thing. It is faith which brings a man under the favor of God, and the act of believing is a sure token that the person is endowed with the grace or habit of Faith. Spiritual actions, as they must proceed from a Divine principle, so they are evidences of that principle from whence they do proceed. 1 *Joh.* 5. 1. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ* (not with a bare assent of the Judgment, but he that believeth it with the heart, *as before* *) *is born of God.* That is an undoubted evidence of his regeneration; for how could the heart of a sinner bring forth such fruit, unless there were the root of grace planted in the heart?

* When a particular duty is produced as an evidence of a state of Salvation, or hath a promise of grace and mercy annexed to it; it ought alwayes to be understood of a sincere spiritual and Evangelical discharge of that duty. Compare *Matt.* 7. 7. *Hos.* 5. 6. with *Jer.* 29. 12, 13. So *Joel* 2. 32. *Prov.* 1. 28. with *Psal.* 145. 18.

2. It may be meant in reference to the Doctrines of the Gospel, *He hath the Witness in himself*] that is, he is able to seal to those truths experimentally, from the work they have had upon his own Conscience, and the effects wrought by them in his own

own soul. He hath not only heard by report of the awakening, convincing, and converting power of the Gospel (which are a strong witness of its divine original and authority) but this witness he hath within himself, as having felt that efficacy. So that he can say to the Ministers, as the men of *Sychar* to the woman, *Joh.* 4. 42. Now we believe, not because of your reports, for we have found it our selves to be a divine doctrine, because it hath subdued our hearts, and wrought mightily upon our spirits. Or as the stranger that commeth into the Church Assembly, upon whom the Word is quick and powerful, and sharp as a two edged sword, piercing into his bosom and discovering the secrets of his heart; O *saith he*, God is in you of a truth; surely this is none other than the Word of the Lord of Hosts, 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. The Arguments produced by the Minister are a *witness without him*, and the energy of the Word upon his heart is a *witness within him*.

3. Or thirdly, You may understand it *metonymically*; the witness for the person witnessing, *q.d.* He that believeth, hath the Spirit of grace and holiness conferred upon him; He is made partaker of the Holy Ghost, whose work it is to bear witness unto Jesus, and without whom they could never believe in Jesus, 1 *Cor.* 12. 3. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; that is, no man can speak it spiritually from the heart as he ought to speak it, so as to subscribe to this principle, that Jesus is the Lord, and to submit to his Lordship and Government, but by the Holy Ghost.

No man out of *sincere affection and true faith*, can profess that Christ is the Lord, but by the instinct of the Holy Ghost. *Engl. Annot. in loc.*

That the first thing I would note in the context, *The nature and excellency of believing.*

2. We have the sinfulness of the sin of unbelief, the horrid and heinous nature thereof. It doth *implicitely* charge the God of truth with falshood, and virtually impeach him as a lyar, v. 10. latter patt, *He that believeth not God, hath made him a lyar; because he believeth not the Record that God hath given of his Son*

How doth unbelief make God a lyar?

Answ. 1. Not by the contamination or pollution of the divine nature; as if the Lord contracted any defilement thereby. He cannot be tempted to sin, nor tainted with sin, *Jam.* 1. 13. The blessed Angels are not tainted with pollution, but the nature of God cannot be tainted, he is infinitely out of the reach of it. Unbelief doth not take from the truth of Gods promise, but puts a bar in the way of our receiving the mercy promised. 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.* And mark what the same Apostle saith, *Rom.* 3. 3, 4. *What if some do not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect? God forbid, q. d.* Let not such a cursed thought enter into your hearts; it cannot be, but the faith of God [that is, the faithfulness of God] as to his word and promise, must abide firm and immutable to such as have an interest therein. We make our fellow servants oftentimes sinners by *real infection*, when the guilt is spread into their souls, being seduced by us, and made partakers with us; but God is *holy, holy, holy*, Isa. 6. 3. infinitely holy, unchangeably holy, capable of nothing but holiness. Our unbelief doth not hurt him but our selves, *Job* 35. 6.

2. But

2. But it makes God a lyar in a way of calumniation or detraction. Unbelievers do really and consequentially (though unjustly) charge God with this imperfection. They say in their hearts, the Lord is not a God of truth: For did they own the truth of God, they would undoubtedly subscribe to his word. By questioning the matter *witnessed*, we impute falshood to the person *witnessing*; and this is the very nature of unbelief. As it is the damning sin that locketh up a man under the guilt of all his transgressions, so it is an exceeding heinous and sinful sin, it carrieth a kind of blasphemy in the bowels of it; it maketh as if God were a lyar. As by believing we seal to the truth of God, *Joh.* 3.33. So by unbelief we do in effect lay falshood to his charge. O the desperate wickedness of mans heart! O the horrid abomination of this great ungodliness! and the wonderful patience of God towards unbelieving sinners!

Tantum valet testimonium, quantum auctoritas testantis.

Non quod dei fidem labefactet eorum impietas: sed quod per eos non stat, quin ipsum arguant vanitatis. Calv.

Thats the second thing to be noted, *The sinfulness of the sin of unbelief.*

3. Now the Text is brought in as a *Specification* of that Record, which is propounded as the object matter of our faith, and in reference to which, unbelievers do asperse and calumniate the God of Heaven as a lyar. They will not acquiess in the dictates of the Scripture, they call in question the record that God hath left concerning his Son. And if it be demanded what this record is, or what special matter it doth contain? The Apostle informeth

eth you in the subsequent verses; *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal Life, and this life is in his Son: He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.*

Which words are a *Compendium of the Christian Charter*: An abbreviature of the great deed of gift, or conveyance, which God hath made of eternal glory and blessedness unto the children of men: the record which he hath left touching the way of salvation. Wherein you have observable, for the distribution of the words, these four parts.

1. The mercy provided, or the blessing conveyed, that is, *eternal life.*] What are we to understand by eternal Life in this place? I answer, 1. *Expressly, and primarily*, the enjoyment of God in heaven; the blessed Vision and fruition of the Lord in glory: the Rivers of pleasures that are at his right hand for ever: the reward of the Inheritance, commonly set forth by this expression, *eternal Life*, *Rom.* 6. 22. *Galat.* 6. 8. 2. *Virtually*, and *secondarily*, all sorts of spiritual blessings, that have a tendency to glory, and are required to fit us for the possession thereof: that is to say, grace and holiness, pardon of sin and reconciliation with the Almighty; the supplies of the Spirit for doing the will of God, and ability to persevere in that way unto the end. These are all included in this expression of *eternal Life*: for they are the first fruits and beginnings of it. As glory is but grace in its ripeness and perfection, so grace is glory in the bud and blossom: And therefore our Saviour calleth the knowledge of

Vita æterna sumitur. 1. Propriè pro beato electorum statu post hanc vitam. 2. Impropriè seu Metonymicè pro viâ seu medio perveniendi ad vitam æternam. Ravan.

of God, eternal Life, *Joh.* 17. 2, 3. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*: that is, This is the foretaste of eternal Life, the way to it, an earnest peny in order to the full possession; it is none other than the gate of heaven.

Thus you are to understand it here, in the full extent and latitude of the expression: as it comprehends the saving mercies conferred upon the Saints on the earth, as well as the crown of Righteousness to be enjoyed in heaven: For in the covenant of Peace (whereof the Text is an abbreviation) God hath made provision for the one, as well as the other. He hath not only given Salvation, if men are sanctified and repent; but hath provided for the sanctification and repentance of his Elect, that they may be saved, *Psal.* 73. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* And accordingly Christ the Mediator hath made his purchase; he hath not only bought an inheritance to be given to the Saints: but for the Elect of God he hath procured *Sainthip*, and all the appendices thereof, that they may be partakers of that inheritance, *Tit.* 3. 5, 6, 7.

That's the first thing in the Text, *The mercy provided, or the blessing conveyed.*

2. You have the Original or Well-spring of this mercy; the fountain of this Blessing, whence it is derived: *why*, from the free grace and pleasure of the Lord; it is his gift. It is not merited and deserved by us, but freely and graciously bestowed upon us: *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal Life.*]

Herein it differs from the reward of ungodliness; that is the natural product of our sins, but this

this is not the purchase of our holiness; that is justly merited, but this mercifully given: as the Apostle observeth, *Rom. 6. 23. The wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Wherein the holy Ghost speaketh, as if he did plainly intend to obviate and prevent the corrupt reasonings of men. Will some be apt to argue, If the wicked by their transgressions deserve eternal destruction, then a Believer by his holiness doth merit eternal Salvation: Nay, saith S. *Paul*, here I must have leave to deny the consequence; the one indeed is a wages, but the other is a gift.

We may take a view of the blessedness, or salvation of the Saints, in a fourfold period: and in each of them (in respect to us) it is of grace. God hath given us eternal Life.

In the
1. Purpose of the Father.
2. Promise of the Gospel.
3. Purchase of the death of Christ.
4. Respect of our interest therein.

1. *In the eternal counsel and purpose of the Father;* As he determined and fore-ordained to bring sons to glory, so it must of necessity be of grace and love. Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed? What could move the Lord to design compassion for some, and to pass by others of the same nature with them, of greater parts and dignity, and in higher place, as to worldly honours and accomplishments? To appoint an handful in comparison unto bliss and glory, to set them apart for himself; and to leave the rest of mankind in their undone condition? Surely it was only because it seemed good in his sight: and therefore it is called election of grace, *Rom. 11. 5, 6. There is a remnant,*

nant, according to the election of grace: and if by grace, then it is no more of works. It is ascribed to pure mercy, nothing but mercy, *Rom.* 9. 15, 16. *For he saith to* Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*

2. *In the Covenant and Promise*, which God hath made of eternal Life, and whereby it is made over to Believers. Pray, whence was the Lord induced to make such a gracious Covenant, but from his own good pleasure? *It is given to us.* 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. It is true, the faithfulness, and, in some sense, the righteousness and justice of God, oblige him to fulfil the Covenant, when it is made [*Nehem* 9. 8.] but it was only free love that could incline him to make it, or to enter into this Covenant; and to make publication thereof, to some and not to others, *Deut.* 7. 6, 7, 8. *Psal.* 147. 19, 20.

3. *In the purchase of it*, by the blood of Christ. God sent his Son into the world upon that errand, by his obedience and sufferings to become the Author of Salvation. And what was the motive that prevailed with the Lord to send him? what provocative stirred him up to make this Mission? *Why, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, Joh. 3. 16. He shut up the fallen Angels irrecoverably in the chains of darkness, he gave not Christ to take their nature upon him: but for us men, and for our Salvation, he came down from heaven: and *herein God commendeth his love to us*, Rom. 5. 8.

4. Lastly, eternal Life may be considered *in respect*

spect of our Title to it, and interest therein; together with the possession thereof: which is accomplished in the work of Regeneration. And whence doth this proceed? *Why*, it is a gift, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. *He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God, who hath also given unto us the earnest of his Spirit.* 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling: not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.* It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

That's the second branch of the Text. *The original of this mercy, whence it doth proceed.*

3. We have the great dispenser of this mercy or blessing: into whose hands it is put to be dealt forth unto Believers. This is Jesus Christ the Son of God; *And this life is in his Son.*] It is put into the hands of a Mediator, and that Mediator is none else but the eternally and only begotten Son of God. It is in him upon a threefold account.

1. As in the *meritorious Cause*, by whom it is procured: by whose death it was purchased. As Christ bought the Elect of God to be his people and servants; so he bought eternal Life to be their inheritance: Hence the Kingdom of Heaven is called *the purchased Possession*, Eph. 1. 14.

2. It is in Christ as *in the Representative*, by whom possession is taken in the name of Believers, and to their use. For when our Saviour entred into heaven, he was not only admitted thither upon his own account: but he took livery and seizin thereof, in the behalf of his people. He entered *as the fore-runner*: and not for himself only, but for us, *Heb.* 6. 20.

3. It is in Christ as in the hands of a *publike Officer*,

ficer, or *Trustee*, whom God the Father hath appointed to this very purpose; to dispense forth eternal Life, unto those for whom it is prepared. For as the souls of men and women are blessed upon the account of Christ's righteousness, so that blessing is communicated through the hands of the Lord Jesus. He is God the Fathers *high Steward*, whom he imployeth in the distribution of his grace. He sends him to bless his children, *Act.* 3. 26. And what the Spirit doth it is in Christ's name, *Joh.* 14. 26.

There's the third particular to be observed: *The great dispenser of this mercy. God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

4. Here is the manner of the conveyance of this mercy; how it is made over to us, and becometh ours: *Why*, by vertue of our union with Christ. It is given forth by the Son, to them that have the Son, and to none besides. *He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.* So that it is laid down or expressed { 1. Positively. 2. Exclusively.

1. Positively, *He that hath the Son hath life.*] He hath it, 1. in respect of right and title thereto: he hath a good interest therein, it is his portion and his inheritance, to which he may warrantably lay claim; and for which he may plead as his own. 2. He hath life in the beginning and entrance thereof: he hath those mercies which are certain harbingers of glory, and will end in glory. Or, 3. He hath eternal life; that is, he shall as undoubtedly enjoy it, as if he were already in possession: it being an usual form of speaking, in the

Præsentia gratia attestatur habitatem futuræ gloriæ sine dubio sequenturam.

writings

writings of the holy Ghost, to mention things future in the present tense, to note the certainty and undoubtedness of their futurity.

2. It is delivered Exclusively, *He that hath not the Son hath not life.*] that is, 1. He hath not life in reality, whatever he may have in his own conceit and apprehension: he may think himself to be something, when indeed and in truth he is nothing. 2. He hath not life; that is, he is stark dead in sins and trespasses, he is under the wrath of God, he is still an accursed wretch. So it may be meant, by an usual *Meiosis*, whereby less is mentioned than is intended. 3. He hath not life, *i. e.* if he die in that estate, it will be evident that he hath it not: he will perish surely, eternally, and unavoidably.

I mainly intend to handle this last branch of the Text. For the further clearing of which, there is one previous enquiry to be made.

Q. The Question is this. What is meant by persons having the Son? Or, How may a man or woman be said to have the Son, that he may have life?

A. For answ. you must note these three things.

1. The way, whereby the holy Ghost in the Scripture doth most commonly set forth our having the Son, it is by *our union with the Son*, or being in him. We are said to have him, by being made one with him. This is evident at the first to any one that is verst in the books of the Old and New Testament: that *having the Son* is the same thing, for substance, with that which is frequently called our *union with Christ*, or being in Christ, *Rom.* 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation, to them that are in Christ Jesus.*] *i. e.* to them that have him, by virtue

vertue of their union with him, *Joh. 6. 54. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* And if you would see how this feeding on Christ doth contribute to a sinners having eternal Life; you will find it to be, because thereby he hath the Son; which is expressed by union with the Son, *v. 56. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* And thus *having the Son* seemeth to be explained in the following part of this Chap: *Joh. 5. 20. And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life:* q. d. this is the way to eternal life, hereby alone you will come to the enjoyment of it: you must have the Son, *that is*, you must be in him, or united to him.

2. By our union with Christ (which is the way whereby we are said to have the Son) I understand all along (*to speak distinctly*) the Oneness of a Believer with the Lord Jesus.

You may observe a difference between these two things, *viz.* 1. The making of Christ and a Believer one. And, 2. Their being one, when they are so knit together.

1. There is the bringing of a soul unto Christ, and ingrafting into Christ. { *Ἕνωσις* *Unitio.* / *Ἕνωσις* *Unitas.* }

And, 2. There is the being or standing of that soul in Christ, when it is so brought and ingrafted, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If any man be in Christ.* Now it is this latter I mean all along, by union. The term is indeed of a latitude that may comprize both of them, but I shall use it principally to denote the latter.

3. Although in the writings of the Scripture you do not meet with this numerical word of *Union with*

Christ, in the very letters and syllables of it; yet you have plentiful mention made of the thing signified thereby. How often do you read of the Saints *being in Christ*? and being put *into Christ*? and expressly in one place, you have mention of their Oneness with him, and with the Father; *Joh.* 17. 21. *That they may be one in us.*

The words of the Text, being thus unfolded and opened, will afford us this doctrinal Point.

That in order to an interest in eternal life, and partaking of those blessings which are given forth by Christ, in a tendency thereunto, it is of absolute necessity, that we be united unto Christ.

If we will have life from the Son, we must have the Son: *that is*, we must be made one with him. No union with Jesus, and no communication of life and salvation from Jesus. For, *he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.* And therefore you shall find, that this is the method and order, wherein the Lord is pleased to conduct sinners to happiness: First, he doth plant them into Christ, and then doth bless them in him, and through him, *Eph.* 1. 3. So that this is a point of a very momentous nature, which I would press on my own heart and yours: that we may perish everlastingly notwithstanding what Christ hath done and suffered, except we be ingrafted into Christ. As life is in him, so our selves must be in him, that we may partake of that life. This is the priviledge which *Paul* did thirst after, and for which he willingly suffered the loss of all things, accounting them but dung; that he might win Christ,

Christus habet quod omnibus prosit; sed si non bibitur, non medetur.

Christ, and be united unto him, or *found in him* i as it is, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9.

In the prosecution and management of this practical note, and for the opening of this Mystery and priviledge of *union with the Lord Jesus*: I will cast the matter I have to speak, under seven general heads.

1. By way of *Introduction*: premising some things, that may be of use to lead us into the study of this Mystery.

2. For *Explication* of the nature of this Union, wherein it doth consist.

3. For *unfolding of the way* and manner, how how it is wrought and accomplished.

4. By way of *Enquiry*, into the *signal and most remarkable properties* of this union.

5. For *Demonstration* of the indispensable necessity of it, in order to the attainment of eternal life.

6. I shall briefly touch upon the special *similitudes*, or resemblances which the holy Ghost maketh use of, for illustration of this Union.

7. Lastly, we will close up all in a particular *application*, for the practical improvement of this Doctrine.

CHAP. II.

Introductory Conclusions premised, to direct us in the studying of this Doctrine.

1. TO premise a little by way of *Introduction*. There are three preliminary conclusions, useful to be pondered and settled in our thoughts, by way of entrance to the study of this great truth: and getting an insight into this subject, of a believers Union, or Oneness with the Lord Jesus.

Concl. 1. That this grace of a Christians union with the Son is, *for the intimacy and closness of it*, one of the deep things of God: one of the great mysteries held forth in the Gospel.

The Doctrines of the Bible are well compared by one to the holy waters in *Ezek. cap.* 47. 3, 4, 5. In some places they were no higher than the ankles of a man; but in other places up to the loyns, nay, a great River that could not be passed over. In some places so shallow, that a Lamb might wade; but in others deep, that an Elephant might swim. So in the truths of God, you have many things easie and obvious, that he that runs may read them; the meanest Christian may apprehend them: But then other passages are so deep, that they may exercise the strongest capacities. You meet with this distinction of divine truths, *Heb.* 5. 12. There is *milk for Babes*, and *strong meat* for such as are more experienced, and have made some considerable progress in the School of Christ. There are plain truths to feed the weakest constitution, and higher mysteries to exercise the greatest parts

parts and indowments. And this point of Union with Christ is one of those mysteries.

Mark, I say for the intimacy of it, and 2 through insight thereinto. As to the matter [or *quod sit*] it is one of the first principles: but in respect of a full comprehension thereof, it is an unsearchable depth. It is called *a mystery*, *a great mystery*, Eph. 5. 32. It is one of the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: *such as never entred into the heart of man to conceive*, 1 Cor. 2. 9. where the Apostle primarily speaketh of these spiritual blessings, though that passage is usually applyed to the kingdom of glory. This Union is set forth, for mysteriousness of it, by that Oneness which is between the Father and the Son, *Joh.* 17. 21. sufficiently importing, that it is an unfathomable depth.

This is needful to be premised, on a fourfold account.

1. That we may begin the study of this point, and you may be careful to manage your attendance upon this doctrine, with an holy and humble adoration and admiration of the wisdom of God, in this glorious contrivance: That God should not only redeem lost sinners by the death of his Son: but make them one with his Son. How should it fill us with astonishment, in the contemplation hereof? That is a posture of spirit, very suitable to an enquiry into the nature of this transcendent priviledge. Well may a person cry out as S. *Paul* on a like occasion, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God*, Rom. 11. 33.

2. That we may the rather be induced, in our meditations on this Doctrine, as to search diligently into the Scriptures, so to confine our thoughts

and speculations thereupon to the plain revelations and discoveries made in the Scriptures. Not to launch forth by our inquisitiveness beyond what is contained therein, and made known to us thereby. For, should we set reason on work, and give up our selves to the guidance thereof, and labour to make this Doctrine compare with Philosophical notions, or the like; we should soon be lost, or be wildred in the contemplation of this thing. Or perhaps (which is worse) split our selves on the rock of some uncouth opinion, bordering upon blasphemy; instead of embracing the truth: as some persons have done, when they sought to be wise herein above what is written. As far as we have the light of the Word to go before us, we may proceed with safety, in our enquiries of this nature: and we should be very careful to venture no further. For it is a great mystery, a matter of pure revelation: the full manifestation whereof is reserved for heaven: and it requireth a special illumination of the Spirit to give us any competent insight into it. So much is evident from the words of our Saviour to his Disciples, *Joh.* 14. 20. *At that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* At that day, *that is*, when the Spirit is poured out from on high, when the Comforter is come to guide you into all truth, then

Fides in regulâ posita est. Cedat curiositas fidei, cedat gloria salutis. Nihil ultra regulam scire, omnia scire est. Tert.

Quæ abstrusiora sunt, & in arcanis divinorum judiciorum penetralibus condita, illa neque investigare tutum est, neque reperire durissimum. Thes. Sam. de Langle de predoctrina.

Qui enim ausu temerario mortalitatis parum memores, per excelsa naturæ & Philosophiæ fastigia (tanquam arbore con-

then you shall know this mystery; *q. d.* Now it is as the lines of a book that is sealed up, a matter beyond your reach, but then you shall read and understand.

scenis) ad mysteria divina aspirant; his para proposita est perpetua inconstantia, & judicii vacillantis & perplexi. Cum enim aliud sit lumen naturæ, aliud Divinum, ita tum illis fit ac si duos soles viderent. Bacon. de sap. veter.

3. That hereupon you may be quickned, to set upon this study with prayer: with the earnest and fervent lifting up your hearts to heaven, that God would anoint your eyes with ey-salve, for the perception of this truth. That he would open your minds and judgments to understand the Scripture in this particular: and lead you into the knowledge and acknowledgment of this mystery. For it is an *Unction from the holy One* must teach us these lessons; 1 *Joh.* 2. 20,27. And therefore that prayer of the *Psalmist* is an excellent pattern, for the outgoings of our hearts, at such a season, *Psal.* 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.*

"Ἕνα τοῦτο ἂν εἴδοις ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐπιγνῶναι; εν ὀφθαλμῷ μόνον. Plato.

4. That in order to the getting acquaintance with this Doctrine, you may be convinced of the necessity of putting your selves under the promise which God hath made, to reveal the secrets of his Covenant to his servants. For this is one of those secrets, a great mystery: and upon that account mostly stiled a *mystical Union.* And you know, the way to get under the verge of that promise, is by indeavouring to maintain an holy dread and fear of the Majesty of heaven upon your hearts:

Nulla in discendo mora est, ubi spiritus sanctus Doctor adest. Beda.

hearts: & not daring knowingly, to sin against him, *Psal.* 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant.* This is the very reason, why many poor Christians, of low parts in comparison with others, can speak more clearly and savourily of these things, than some profound Doctors, who are strangers to the power of godliness: because the promise is not made to great parts and learning, but to such as have a reverential awe and regard of the Majesty of God upon their spirits. The Lord doth often hide these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes. *Why?* because it so pleased him; and because he hath promised to instruct them in these lessons, *Psal.* 25. 9. *The meek he will guide in judgment, and the meek he will teach his way.* Again, v. 12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him he shall teach in the way that he shall chuse.* And therefore *mark what I say*: Humility, self-emptiness, and poverty of spirit, together with a due dependance on the teachings of God, will strike a greater stroke in acquiring the knowledge of these Lessons, than the choicest accomplishments of parts and learning without them. A conscientious respect to plain truths and precepts, is the way to learn hidden mysteries, *John* 7. 17. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine.*

Ille qui cum puritate animæ legit Scripturas, plus proficiet quamsi eudare tentaret mysteria multis commentariis. Acost. Jes.

That's the first Conclusion to be premised.

2. *Concl.* 2. Although the Union of a Christian with the Lord Jesus, is in it self a mystery, not easie to be attained as to right apprehensions thereof; yet it is a point of very great concernment to be

be studied; and a clear insight thereinto will abundantly recompense all the pains you can take in the search of it. So that the difficulty of attainment, should not deter us from a diligent enquiry into it: but rather stir us up to pursue it, with all our might and industry. It is a point wherein a man cannot *with safety* be ignorant. It is incumbent upon us, as we tender our everlasting welfare, to get right apprehensions of the substance of this thing. A mistake herein may occasion our eternal undoing. And therefore when Christ had treated, *Mat.* 13. of the mixture there is in the visible Church, in many parables together: How that some are *in the Church* who are not *of the Church*; that there are many seem to be members of the body, who are not spiritually united to Christ the head of the body (for that is the drift of the parables, though delivered in other words) how doth he close his Sermon upon that subject? See *v.* 51. *Jesus saith unto them, have ye understood all these things?* As if he had said, It doth infinitely concern you to get a good understanding in this matter: you cannot safely be in the dark, as to this Doctrine: Let these things sink deep into your hearts, and be much pondered in your thoughts. Hence the holy Ghost is so much upon it, and doth frequently mention, not only the excellency and need of Jesus Christ, but likewise the necessity of our Oneness with Christ, or being in him.

It is a dangerous thing to have false conceptions in our minds concerning this union, or to be ignorant of it, for three Reasons especially.

1. Because it is the want of a right knowledge, and due consideration of this very thing which is the cause of the ruine of many thousand souls.

Amongst

Amongst those that live within the pale of the Church, and have heard the joyful sound of the Gospel, a great number perish by splitting upon this rock. They apply the vertue of the death of Christ to themselves, without ever minding whether they are in Christ. They hope to be saved upon his account, and so go on securely to hell, under the shelter of those hopes; because they never considered the nature and necessity of being united to his person. See the very rise of their destruction, how they plead themselves into a fools paradise, in expectation of being pardoned and saved through Christs blood; because they never minded if they had the Son or not; if they were in Christ or no, *Luk.* 13. 26, 27. *Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets: But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are: depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.* Observe their mistake from the answer that is returned them; *I know you not whence you are*] as if he had said, You are utter aliens and strangers unto me, persons with whom I never was acquainted: Though you heard my Word, yet you were never ingrafted into my body: though you have eaten and drunk in my presence, yet you were not implanted into me; nor ever had any fellowship with me. And who are those which thus deceive themselves? why, many, very many, as in that parallel Text, *Mat.* 7, 22, 23. I think, experience may give us cause to suspect, they are the most.

2. It is a dangerous thing to have false apprehensions of Union with Christ; because this is the great fundamental blessing upon wch all our comfort is built: and other spiritual blessings have a de-

dependance hereupon. So that see to it, that you study this Doctrine, and judge aright concerning it: for if the foundation fail upon which our comfort is bottomed, all the superstructure must of necessity vanish that is erected upon that foundation. All other attainments are as nothing without this. If the leading mercy fail upon which others depend, we must undoubtedly fall short of those other mercies, which have their dependance hereon. Why sirs, Union with Christ is the very *Basis* of consolation, and the leading mercy, *Joh.* 15. 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.* The meaning is this, A mans profession is nothing, and all his common indowments and priviledges are nothing: they will not signifie a jot, as to save him from destruction: he cannot escape the damnation of hell, except he get into Christ, and abide in him.

3. It is dangerous to be ignorant of this mystery, and it much concerneth us to get a sound knowledge hereof: because this Doctrine, *of late*, hath been notably corrupted, and perverted. It hath been abused to the countenancing of some mens (*even*) blasphemous assertions, which they have vented, under the notion of high attainments. They have endeavoured to break down that distinction which is between Christ and his people, and to turn the whole substance of the Gospel into *Allegories*, upon pretence of opening this Union. And it concerneth us to be well instructed and established in *present truths*; as the Apostle *Peter* phraseth it, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. truths which are mostly perverted in the present time, or that need special vindication.

tion in the present age, wherein we live: in the defence whereof God calleth us to stand up against the adversaries. If we would not be led aside by the error of the wicked, and fall from our own stedfastness, as we must labour to grow in grace, so to increase in the knowledge of Christ, 2 *Pet.* 3. 17, 18.

So much for the second Conclusion to be premised.

3. *Concl.* 3. Instead of curiously prying into, and over-much inquisitiveness after this Mystery, and the manner of this Union, further than is revealed in the Scriptures of truth; it should be the great design of mens souls to secure it unto themselves; and to make it evident that they are sharers therein. Herein lieth the marrow and fatness of this glorious priviledge, when we can personally appropriate it to our own souls, and say: This is a mercy, whereof we are partakers. Else, what sweetness can we taste in the contemplation thereof, whilst our selves are strangers thereunto? This is the very counsel of the Apostle, in another case, to his *Corinthians*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 3, 4, 5. They were enquiring after a proof of Christ speaking in him: *Why*, saith he, your business lieth in reflection upon your selves, to prove that Christ is formed in you. The like advice I would give in this present affair. And we should the rather give diligence herein, upon a threefold account.

1. Because hereby we shall be the better inabled, to perceive the real meaning of what is delivered in the unfolding of this Mystery: We shall easier discern the import of all the particulars mentioned in the opening of it: when we have found it made good upon our own souls, and feel somewhat wrought

wrought within us answerable to the doctrines which are taught concerning it. For *Sirs*, a little experience of the power of godliness will notably help a man to discern clearly into the mysteries of godliness: it will serve instead of many Commentators for the unfolding of divine truths. If a Scholar should make a large and eloquent Oration, to set forth the sweetness of honey; a little taste of it would contribute more to a right understanding thereof, than many learned Lectures without it. So when persons have tasted the grace of God in this Union, matters will be plain and easie unto them, that seem dark and intricate and full of obscurity unto others. In what a puzzle was *Nicodemus* as to the Doctrine of Regeneration, in his understanding, for want of feeling the work of Regeneration upon his heart? So that he cried out, *How can these things be? Joh. 3.4,9.* And therefore *David* exhorteth us *to taste and see, Psal. 34. 8.* that is, endeavour to taste, that you may the better know, and understand the goodness of the Lord.

Postquam tactus spiritu beatus, in novum me hominem mutatum sensi, reparavit, mirum in modum pretium confirmare se dubia, patere clausa, lucere tenebrosa, &c. Cyp. Ep. 2. ad Donat.

2. This is to employ these excellent truths, which God hath graciously revealed, to the end for which they are revealed to us. The Lord hath not opened the treasures of his Wisdom, in declaring these mysteries, only to feed mens fancies, and to fill their heads with speculations: but to excite and extimulate us to get an interest in these mercies: that we should personally apply them to our selves, and make sure our claim and title thereto. You will find this *apparently* to be the end of the promulga-

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tion of this very Doctrine, 1 Joh. 5. 13. *These things have I written, to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.* These things] *that is*, these high mysteries of salvation afore-mentioned; that it is in the Son, and to be enjoyed by vertue of our union with the Son; I have written them, that you may take them home to your own consciences, and pass judgment upon your selves, according to the tenour of these words.

3. If we learn the nature of this priviledge, and do not secure it to our selves, it will but tend to the heightning of our condemnation. So that better for us we had never known it, or heard a word concerning it: for this very thing will aggravate our contempt of the grace of God; and the reflection upon it will be a continual torment upon our spirits. What a cut will this be to a mans conscience, when he cometh to die, to bethink himself, I knew that there was such a glorious priviledge prepared for the children of men, and yet would never press after the enjoyment of it: I preferred the pleasures of sin, and satisfaction of some base lusts before it: I was offered the Son, and life and redemption through his blood, and would not labour to secure it unto my self, so that now I am undone eternally and irrecoverably? See how Christ sets forth mens wickedness on this account, *Prov.* 1. 24, 25, 26. And it is evident, conscience will take advantage from hence, to be a tormentor, to be a worm gnawing upon the very entrails of a mans spirit: How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof? O what madness have I been guilty of, to know these things, and not to make them sure unto my self? *Prov.* 5. 11, 12, 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Union with Christ distinguished, and the branches of the distinction explicated.

HAving laid down these things by way of *Introduction*, let us now proceed to the *Explication* of the matter itself. The question is this.

Qu. *What are we to understand by a personal Union with the Lord Jesus? Or, How may a man be said to be united unto the Son, and so to have the Son?*

Ans. To this Question I shall answer two ways, by { 1. *Distinction.* 2. *Description.*

1. By way of *Distinction*. Our Lord Jesus himself, in the Sermons which he preached, hath made mention of a twofold union with him; or of two ways how men and women may be in him. 1. By way of *visible Profession*, or external adhæsion only; as a dead branch or sprig is in the Tree, though it nothing partake of the sap derived from the root; as a glass eye or wooden leg is in the body, though they do not partake of life with the body, in any degree whatsoever. 2. By way of *spiritual ingrafture*, and implantation; when they are in Christ so as to be quickned by Christ, and receive nourishment from him: as a living fruit-bearing slip or sience is ingraffed into the stock. This distinction you have, *John* 15. 1, 2. *I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth*

more

more fruit. Which words are a parable, wherein, 1. Christ compareth himself to a Vine; and it is a very *pat* comparison, both in regard of the meanness and lowness of his outward appearance, having no form and comelines that he should be desired in that respect: as the vine is the most despicable, in outward view, amongst the Trees of the garden. And in regard of his real worth and excellency; although the vine hath no beautiful shape, yet it is a very useful and excellent plant: so the Lord Jesus is the chiefest of ten thousands, he is indeed a plant of renown. But principally Christ is here resembled to a vine, in regard of the sustentation of the branches, and the juicy influence that from him is imparted unto the branches: it is by Christ they are upheld, and by communications from him they are maintained. 2. God the father is likened to the Husbandman; by whom the vine is planted and dressed; by commission from whom Christ was sent upon his work, and furnished with all things requisite thereunto, and by whom persons are grafted into him. 3. And persons in the visible Churches are signified by the branches in the Vine: Of which, *saith our Saviour*, there are two sorts; some that are dead and withered, and others which are living and bring forth fruit. And both of them may be said to be in him; the one sort by way of profession, the other by way of spiritual implantation. Every branch *in me* that beareth not fruit, *&c.* I will open this distinction, in each of the members of it.

1. There is Union with Christ, or a being in Christ by way of *common Profession*, or outward adherence only: when yet they have no saving interest in him, or benefit by him. Thus all that own

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the Christian Religion, and have a shew of godlines are in him; though perhaps they have nothing of the life and substance of godlines. They are said to be in his Kingdom, in the Church which is his Body; and out of that Kingdom they shall be gathered and cast into Hell, *Mat.* 13. 41. *The Son of man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;* (not only out of the world in general, but out of the visible Church, the Mediators Kingdom) *and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* As carnal Professors are said to be sanctified through Christ, so in a like sence it may be said they are in Christ. You read expresly of their being sanctified by the blood of the Covenant, who yet drew back unto perdition, and trampled that blood under their feet, *Heb.* 10. 29. *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy of, who hath troden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?* i. e. whereby he was separated and set apart from the Heathen, and worshippers of false gods; and taken amongst the professed people and servants of Christ: this I take to be the genuine

Regnum 1. *Oecumenicum, Christi* 2. *Oecumenicum.*

Statim perebunt Christo summo Judici nassores, & Ecclesia purgatores; tollent enim è regno Christi omnia offendicula. Marl. in loc.

There is a sanctification to the purifying of the flesh, and a sanctification to the purifying of the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God, *Heb.* 9. 13, 14. The sanctification external to the purifying of the flesh consisteth in the mans separation from the world, and dedication unto im-

God's service by calling and Covenant, common to all the members of the visible Church, &c. *Dickf.*

import of the place; for it is an evident allusion to the blood of the Sacrifice, sprinkled on the whole body of the *Israelites*, whereby they were sanctified and set apart unto the Lord; or as a token of their covenanting with the Lord: although with many of them God was not well-pleased, they continued weltring in their sins, under the power of their unbelief and other wickednesses, notwithstanding. Now as they are sanctified by Christ, so in a like sence it may be said they are in him: they belong to him, as his disciples and followers by way of profession. See *Joh. 6. 66.*

Concerning which Union with Christ, by way of common profession, or external adhæsion only, I will intreat you to mind these four *Positions.*

1. *Position.* 1. The principal bonds or ligaments whereby this union is made up, by which persons are thus knit unto Christ, do mainly consist of four things.

1. An approbation or acknowledgment of the doctrines of Christianity.
2. An external subjection to the Ordinances of Christ.
3. Some common workings upon their hearts and spirits.
4. A measure of reformation in their lives and conversations.

Let us a little touch upon them severally.

1. The first bond of this Union, by way of external adhæsion, is *an approbation and acknowledgment of the doctrines of Christianity*; so as to assent unto the truth, and confess (at least) the goodness and excellency of them: so as to close with them,

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in opposition to all contrary ways of Religion. It is not enough to the establishment of this Union, that a man doth hear the word of Christ; so may a Heathen do, out of curiosity; so may a *Jew* or *Mahometan*, to blaspheme and cavil: but at least there must be some kind of reception and approbation of the word. Thus the carnal Professors of whom the Apostle maketh mention (for of such he speaketh under the name of *Jews*) *Rom.* 2.17,18,21. It was this which made them *Jews* outwardly; though they were no savingly instructed, not taught the truth as it is in Jesus; yet they had some knowledge of the mind of God, and were convinced of the truth and excellency of the Law of the Lord; so as to subscribe to it, and to own and approve it as such. This made them Christ's people at large, by way of profession. And this must needs be one of the ligatures of that Union; for such as avowedly reject the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, are not so much as Christ's seeming friends; but open enemies to his crown and dignity.

See *Rev.* 2. 9. The Christians were so first reckoned by the Heathen *populum*, *vid. Syet. in vita Claud. Judaeos impulsore Christo assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit.* So that the Christians seem to have been under that name, and to have been banished with them by the decree mentioned, *Act.* 18. 2.

2. There must be an *external subjection to the Ordinances of Christ*: so as to afford their presence at them, and outward compliance with them, and attendance upon them. For *Sirs*, Gospel Ordinances are the badges of Christ's followers, as well as means to convey his grace into their

Sacramenta, ut & alia instituta divina, sunt signa praerogativae fidei.

souls. And if a people belong to him at all, they must at least wear his livery. So that when persons live in the open neglect, or contempt of the Ordinances and Institutions of the Lord Jesus, or think they are arrived at so high a pitch as to be above Ordinances; they do thereby declare themselves, to be so far from the truth of grace, that they are not arrived to a serious profession, *Above Ordinances, and below Christianity*. Such have not so much as Christ's livery upon them; for this is one of the bonds of a common union. Thus *Simon Magus* was baptized into Christ, and for a while held fellowship with the Disciples, and so in a sort did belong to Christ; till afterwards he apostatized and discovered his rottenness, *Act.* 8. 13. So far the lowest rank of hypocrites ordinarily go. It is true, they have no spiritual communion or fellowship with Christ in his Ordinances: but they are many times pretty-constant in attendance upon Ordinances. So those carnal *Israelites*, whom God owneth in this respect to be his people, *Isa.* 58, 1, 2. And therefore the Apostle calls men off, from trusting in this, to mind the grace of Regeneration, and Conversion upon their hearts: for these priviledges avail not to a saving union with Christ, but a new creature, *Gal.* 6. 15.

3. There is usually some *common workings upon their hearts and spirits*: as now, convictions in the conscience of the evil of sin, sometimes an inclination upon their souls to give up themselves to be the Lords: only a beloved lust hindereth the performance of it. Possibly many common graces of the Spirit are conferred upon them, in which respect they are said to be made *partakers of the holy Ghost*: for so far a carnal Professor may arrive,

tive, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. The holy Ghost may strive with a professed enemy to the Kingdom of Christ; but when he shall moreover work some remarkable effects upon a sinner; as terrors in apprehension of the wrath of God, desires to be sheltered under the wings of Christ, that he may escape that wrath; so that he joyneth himself outwardly to his people, then he becometh a *sometime friend*, though he proceed no further.

There are some Converts *external* from the world to the Church, who yet stick in their naturals, and are not in the sense of sin fled unto Christ for refuge, not converted from nature to saving grace. *Dudley.*

4. The last bond which I shall mention, of this common union with Christ, is *some degrees of reformation in the life and practise.* When persons live and lie weltering in gross pollutions of the world, they do apparently belong unto the world: they do openly proclaim themselves to be the very children of the devil. If a man belong to Christ but by profession, there must be some measure of reformation wrought: there must be an actual abstaining from those wickednesses whereby the name of Christian is openly contradicted. As real holiness and close walking with God is essential to the being of a *Disciple indeed*; so a cleansing of the outside of the cup and platter (as our Saviour calleth it) is required to make a man a *Disciple but in appearance.* And thus far they commonly go, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21, 22. They retained their doggish and swinish nature still, as is evident from their Apostacy, v. 22. *The dog is turned to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire:* and yet *they escaped the pollutions of the world,* and that *through the knowledge of the Lord and Sa-*

viour Jesus Christ, v. 20. Although the doctrines of the Gospel had not a *saving effect* upon their souls, yet they had a *real effect*: though their natures were not *transformed*, yet their lives in some particulars were *reformed*: their conversations were cleansed from gross and scandalous abominations. That's the first Position touching this matter.

2. *Pos.* 2. It is a very great priviledge and mercy, considered in it self, for a man or woman to be taken thus neer unto Jesus Christ, and in this sense to be united to him; *namely*, by way of external adhesion. To be separated from the Heathen to be his people, and to be made to differ from the profane world and the notoriously wicked; who do avow their sins openly in the face of men, and declare themselves subjects unto the prince of darkness. Though it be not the best of priviledges, yet it is a great priviledge; though it be not a mercy to be rested in, yet it is a mercy thankfully to be acknowledged; it is no way to be slighted and undervalued. The Apostle speaketh of it as such, *Rom.* 3. 1, 2. *What advantage hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?* that is, what benefit doth arise by being a member of the Church of Christ? what profit is it to be a Jew outwardly, a Disciple by profession? into which relation circumcision did give them solemn entrance, it was the Ordinance for initiation. Is this nothing? or is it a priviledge of a low nature? No, in no wise, saith the Apostle, do not thus esteem it. It is an eminent mercy, there is *much* advantage by it every way.

You will say, wherein lieth the advantage of being thus in Christ? *Answ.* In four things especially.

1. Chiefly

1. Chiefly and primarily, because hereupon they are set under the means of grace, and tenders of salvation. They have eternal life set before their souls, and upon the terms of the Gospel offered unto them. Hereby they do enjoy the word of Christ, the Oracles of God; and the Ordinances, which are the places wherein the Lord Jesus himself is to be found of them that seek him: and which are the conduit-pipes through which he doth use to convey spiritual grace and blessings, to such as thirst after them. The remainders of the light of nature are enough to leave a sinner inexcusable in his condemnation, when he doth not live up to that *light*; but they can proceed no further, they can make no discoveries of the path of salvation: But now persons in the visible Church have these things revealed before their eyes: they have Christ set forth that they may know him: and his excellencies displayed that they may love him. So that it is a merciful priviledge in this respect; Nay, if the fault be not in themselves, it may bring them to Christ in a saving way, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. *He sheweth his word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and his Judgments unto* Israel. *He hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord. q. d.* Here is matter of praise and abundant thanksgiving. See also *Rom.* 9. 4. and *Ezek.* 20. 11, 12.

2. Hereby persons do enjoy communion with such as are real Saints, and servants of Christ in sincerity; which may be of excellent use to provoke them to emulation, and so to save their souls. They have the benefit of the society of the godly, to be an incouragement unto them to serve the Lord indeed: and the advantage of their ex-

Multum refert quibuscum vivas.

ample, as a copy for imitation. They are under their counsel for admonition; and many times partakers of their provoking conferences, to incite and stir them up to become such as *they* are. They have a share in their inspection and watchfulness over them, whereby oftentimes they are restrained and kept in due bounds. And so it is a signal mercy in this respect. As by fellowship with the wicked, and contracting friendship with them, men learn their wayes, and get a snare unto their souls: so by communion with the Saints, persons are in a capacity of learning their ways, and saving their souls, *Psal.* 141. 4, 5. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oyl, which shall not break my head*: that is, (by an usual *Metaphor*) it will abundantly tend to my spiritual good, and to the promoting and carrying on my eternal welfare. As coals are kindled by other burning coals: so are the ungodly many times by hearty counsel, and holy walking, and the like, made instrumental to quicken and inflame such as have fellowship with them, *Jam.* 5. 19.

Nihil tutius amicâ monitore.

3. From hence it is that they do *in a sort* partake of that special care which God taketh of his Church: and receive some drops of those blessings which Christ doth showr down upon his Church. You know, that although God by a general providence doth mind and govern the whole creation [he feeds the ravens when they cry, and gives meat to the beasts of the field] yet he hath a special inspection into the affairs of his Church: he maketh peculiar provision for them, reserving his dainties

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in store for them. Now by this external adhasion unto Christ, and being in the visible Church, a person may have a share in those mercies; and the out-skirts of those blessings may fall down upon their heads. As one that is but a sojourner in a family, and no stated fixed member of it, may taste of many good things, which the good man of the house prepared for his own children. And therefore a people are said upon this kind of nearness, to have God himself nigh unto them: that is, to be under his special care, even the body of the people, though multitudes of them went no further than profession, *Psal.* 148. 14. *The children of* Israel *a people near unto him.* Deut. 4. 7. *For what Nation is there so great, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all that we call upon him for?* And it seemeth to be mentioned as a priviledge of the whole visible Church, *Isa.* 4. 5. *That the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies* [upon the Church of Christ, whereof Zion was a type, and upon all the particular Congregations thereof] *a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night.* The meaning is this, God will in a special manner be a guide unto them, and undertake for their safeguard and protection: He will lead them and preserve them, as he did the children of *Israel* in their travels out of *Egypt*, when he went before them in a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. So, *Isa.* 31. 5. *As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem, defending also he will deliver it, and passing over he will preserve it.* As birds flying] that is, swiftly and speedily, at the cry of his people he will come as in an instant, before the adversaries are aware. Or as a bird doth hover o-

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ver the nest to preserve her young ones, so will the Lord watch over his people to secure and deliver them. These and such promises are made to the Church in general, and even carnal Professors, by vertue of their station in the Church, may have a share in this security & these deliverances. As when the godly joyn in confederacy with the wicked, they may be made to smart under the judgments that are sent upon the wicked: so Professors by their fellowship with the godly, may taste of the blessings imparted unto them.

4. It is a great priviledge, because hereby men are often restrained from venting many corruptions that otherwise would have prevailed: & from turning aside into such sins and abominations wherein others wallow. And so they are prevented and kept from contracting much guilt which otherwise would be contracted by them. And this is no small advantage. Restraining grace is a mercy, though sanctifying grace is an higher. And God doth make use of this meerness to Christ, as a restraint or bridle to stop sinners in their carier: hereby they are *purged from their old sins*, 2 Pet. 1. 9. That's the second Position.

3. *Position.* 3. When men and women are only thus united unto Christ, by way of visible profession or external adhæsion, though they may abide with him for a time, and seemingly cleave unto him; yet at last there will be made a separation betwixt them; and this union will be dissolved and broken asunder. As it is a *dissolable union* for the nature of it, so in the event it will actually be dissolved, sooner or later,

Quemadmodum Ziziphus fuit in regno Dei, & Pisces piscis in reti Evangelico, eorum vestis nuptiali in nuptiis Christi: ita

ter, by one means or another. When a soul is in Christ by a spiritual implantation, he shall never be parted from Christ; but this common union will be broken, and the cords of it snapt asunder. If a dead branch stick to the Vine for a season, yet at length the Gardiner cometh with his pruning-knife and cutteth it away. This is the very Metaphor whereby the dissolving of this Union is set forth, *John* 15. 2. *Every branch in me, that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.* *Gr.* he cuts off with his pruning-hook, and casteth them into the fire. If they do not live through the vine, they shall have no further being in the vine.

in Christi, id qui non fit fructifer, tamquam ramus sylvestris, & secundum naturam pertinens ipsum, non amplius vera fide. Quare tollatur ab insitione, & velut resecto exsiccatur, perditi, & ad ignem abiciuntur. Bucer.

And there are three principal ways, how this separation is made, or this sort of union is dissolved.

1. By their Apostacy and drawing back from the profession of the Faith, in days of tribulation and trial: for they are the usual seasons wherein carnal Professors discover themselves. When God doth exercise his Church under discriminating providences, as sore afflictions and persecutions for the truths sake, then it appeareth who are his indeed, and friends unfeigned to the truth. Then the living branches stick fast, and such as are dead fall off and perish. For this *Sori*, is one end which God aimeth at, by bringing his Church into distress; not as if he took pleasure in their smart and grief, but to

Qui revolant ab fide, non sunt nostri, & habitant. Tertul.

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pare off their exuberancies, and that such as are approved may be made manifest. Then hypocrites mostly unstrip themselves of their covering, and are discovered to be what they are, *Mat.* 13. 21. *When tribulation or persecution arisseth because of the word, by and by they are offended.* Mark it, They were only united to Christ by external adhesion: and when the winter cometh, and the frost nipped them, they wither and fall away. In this sense we hold falling away from grace, and apostatizing from the faith, *that is* from common grace and the profession of the Faith. This may serve to direct you how to judge of *Apostates*, and backsliders: either they fall but partially, and God in due time will restore, and bring them back by weeping cross: or if they depart totally and finally from Christ. The reason is, because they were but dead branches in Christ, and so they drop off.

Amici ob utilitatem suae vel utilitas dissolvuntur, ut amicos sui mutuo erant amici, sed utilitatis.

2. This common union is dissolved, by the execution of the spiritual judgments of God upon their souls: by giving them up to themselves, and delivering them over to the will of Satan. When persons continue long unprofitable in the Church, under the Ordinances, and are not spiritualized nor bettered by them; God is provoked thereby to withdraw the very strivings of his Spirit from such; and to let loose the reins of their corruptions, which formerly were kept under; to give them up to vile affections, and a reprobate mind, that they may make it appear to whom they really belong: even to the God of this world, the spirit that ruleth in the children of disobedience. You read

read that thus he dealt with the Heathen, for not living up to the dictates of the light of nature, *Rom.* 1. 24, 26, 28, 29. Much more may it be feared, when persons abuse the light of the Gospel, and receive the grace of God therein manifested in vain, or turn it into wantonness. For as it is, *Heb.* 6. 7, 8. *The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.* By the earth understand the souls of men and women, likened to the earth, for their natural stupidity. *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord:* 2. Because of their tendency downwards unto earthly things: But in this place especially, because of the souls activity and fructifying vertue, it will bring forth something either good or evil. By the rain that cometh oft upon this earth, *is meant*, the doctrines of the word, which fall as the rain, and distil as the dew upon the face of the ground, for the watering thereof. Now, that earth which drinks in this rain, and beareth thorns and briars [*i. e.* if they live still in their sins, defiled with their abominations, and are not such as walk answerably in some measure to the means they are under] is nigh unto cursing [unto this spiritual curse of being given up to themselves, to commit iniquity with greediness, whereby they are sealed up to destruction: to the curse of barrenness, *Never fruit grow upon these souls any more.* See also, *Hos.* 4. 17. and *Psal.* 81. 8, 11, 12. This should have a mighty influence upon us, to make us watchful over our hearts, that we be not barren or unfruitful in the vineyard of Christ.

3. This

3. This Union will be certainly and solemnly dissolved, by pronouncing the sentence of eternal judgment. If the hypocrisie of such be not discovered until the last, then it will be made known in the face of all the world. Christ will then rend them from him, however they may hope to shelter themselves under his wings. Then the Lord will judge between cattle and cattle, between one branch and another, *Mat.* 13. 49, 50. *At the end of the world, the Angels shall come, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire.* Mark it, They shall be then severed from amongst the just; intimating that now they are together as tares and wheat in the same field, as good fish and bad in the same net, as living branches and dead in the same vine; but then the wicked shall be removed from their station, and cast into hell. *That's the third Position.* That this Union with Christ will sooner or later be dissolved.

4. *Pos.* 4. The state and condition of such persons as are thus united to Christ, by way of external adhærence only, and do not aspire nor press after a further intimacy with him, and a secret conjunction; that do not improve this privilledge that they may be indeed, what they profess to be, is a very wretched estate, and a miserable condition. It is worse than the condition of open enemies to Christ; such as are grossly ignorant of the truths of the Gospel, and that never professed to be his servants. The Scripture calleth it a *wretched and miserable condition*: that is, very wretched, exceeding miserable. God doth hate them with a perfect hatred, and loath them with a full abhorrence and detestation, *Rev.* 3. 16, 17. *So then, because thou art*

luke-

lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold [neither a sincere Professor of Religion, nor a professed enemy to Religion; neither faithful to Christ, nor an open adversary against Christ] *I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Better for such carnal Professors, that continue in that estate, and rest contented therewith, without getting higher; I say, better for them they had never known the way of righteousness, then to take up their rest in this common union; and not to improve it to a pursuance after a more inward conjunction with Christ, 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. The sadness and deplorableness of their condition will appear in these four particulars.

1. Because they do thereby put themselves into the greatest unlikelihood, and incapacity of being ever savingly wrought upon, of any that live where the word of Christ is published: and the glad tidings of Salvation are made known to the children of men. There is more hopes of the conversion of the most debauched wretches, that live in a professed subjection to the devil, than of those who have long continued only carnal Professors. As when they apostatize they do totally become the most bitter enemies of Christ; so it is the hardest thing to draw them effectually unto Christ. This is none other doctrine than our Saviour hath taught, *Mat.* 21. 31. *Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God, before you.* They go into the Kingdom of God] *that is*, they are easier prevailed upon, to subject themselves to Christ's government: it is a harder thing to work upon your souls, than upon

theirs;

theirs: there is more probability of their being converted, than of yours. Who were these to whom Christ speaks? *Why*, they were the chief Priests and Scribes and Elders, men that were thought to be *some bodies* in the Church, that were had in great estimation of the Church, that seemed to be pillars in comparison; that made a fair shew, but rested therein, as being strangers to the life and power of godliness. Mind it, *saith Christ*, I say unto you, verily I say unto you; *q. d.* It is an undoubted truth, let it sink deep into your hearts, that publicans and the harlots [the vilest of people] go into the Kingdom of God before you. It will seem no wonder, that such are in the greatest unlikelihood of being savingly wrought upon, if you mind these three Considerations.

1. *Consider*, That these dead branches in Christ, or carnal Professors, do commonly thereupon maintain a good opinion of themselves; and get a strong confidence thereby, that their estate is good. They think themselves well enough already, and therefore will not easily be perswaded to look after a saving interest in the Redeemer: because they suppose their interest is already secured. And be sure of this, that nothing is a greater hindrance of a sinners deliverance out of an estate of wrath, than a strong confidence that he is in a good estate, *Prov.* 26. 12. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.* It may well bear this interpretation. Seest thou an unregenerate person that is righteous in his own eyes? [for by wil-

Initium est salutis notitia peccati. Egregiè hoc mihi videtur dixisse Epicurus. Nam qui peccare se nescit, corrigi non vult. Deprehendat se oportet, antequam emendet. Sen. Epist. 28.

wisdom all along is meant righteousness and holiness, that is true wisdom; the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom] There is more hope of a fool; that is, of one that is plainly and openly a wicked person: for he is the fool in *Solomons* account. Kings are wont to have their fools, and *Solomon* was a great King, and his fool is the ungodly, that provoketh the Lord to wrath, and neglects to provide for eternity, and selleth his soul for a trifle. So *Mat.* 9. 12. *They that be whole need not the Physician*; that is, Such as have a good opinion of themselves, do not see their need of Christ's righteousness; they will not hunger and thirst after it, as being full already.* There is a double work required to the conversion of such, first to empty them of self, and then to drive them unto the Saviour: first to make them sensible of their sickness, and then to quicken them to seek a remedy: first to convince them of their damnable estate, and then to cause them to flee from the wrath to come. And the first is a matter of very great difficulty.

* *Quid nos decipimus? Non est extrinsecus malum nostrum: intra nos est, in visceribus ipsis sedet. Et ideo difficulter ad sanitatem pervenimus, quia nos aegrotare nescimus.* Sen. Epist. 50.

2. *Consider*, That such as are in Christ by visible profession only, are most likely to have their consciences seared as with an hot iron: so that those awakening truths which serve to rouse up other sinners, produce little or no effect upon their souls. By continuance in sin under the preaching of the Word, and constant attendance upon Ordinances, men become Sermon-proof, and Prayer-proof, Sacrament-proof, and Affliction-proof. Scarcely

the hottest fire will melt such obdurate spirits. As it is reported of them that live neer the Cataracts of *Nilus*, by continual hearing those dreadful sounds, they become deaf and stupid: so it befalleth these hypocrites, by constant hearing of Gospel-truths, and not regarding them, their spirits at length become dead, stark dead, *twice dead*, as it is expressed, *Jude* 12. Before they were dead in sin, and now they are dead in security likewise: To their natural hardness is added a contracted hardness. And who are they of whom the Apostle speaketh *thus*, such as are *clouds without water*: that is, who make a shew of Godliness, but have nothing of the substance: who have the form, without the power of it. To them the word of the Lord proveth an obdurating word: that maketh their hearts fat, and their ears heavy, and shutteth their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed, *Isa.* 6. 9, 10.

Primo importabile, processu temporis grave, paulo post leve, postea placet & suave est: ad extremum quod erat importabile ad faciendum est impossibile ad continendum. Bern.

3. *Consider withal*, That God is usually provoked by such mens barrenness and unproficiency, utterly to depart away from them, and so to bind them over unavoidably to condemnation: to *swear in his wrath, that they shall never enter into rest*, *Heb.* 3. 18, 11. So that he will deal with them no further, in order to their repentance and salvation. For this is the very method of Gods dispensations of this nature, first men resist the Spirit, which he sent to knock at the door of their hearts, and then he calleth away his Spirit from them, *Gen.* 6. 3. First, they

they neglect to hearken to the grace of God, that should lead them to repentance, and so he will wait to be gracious no further; but sealeth them up in a state of impenitence. First, they will not believe, and God sweareth they shall never believe, *Joh.* 12. 39, 40.

2. The condition of these unfruitful branches in Christ, is miserable above that of others, in respect of the intolerableness of the damnation that will befall, and the sore torments that will be inflicted upon such. All ungodly sinners will be punished *everlastingly*, but such as seemed to cleave unto Christ, but yet served the devil, will be punished *most severely*, and made to drink of the dregs of the cup of God's indignation: as sinning against most light, Gospel-light, and under means of grace denied to others: which are the main aggravations of sin. To them is reserved *the mist of darkness for ever*; that is, the grossest darkness and sorest destruction, 2 *Pet.* 2. 17. You know, our Lord Christ pronounceth the most terrible woes on this account, *Mat.* 11. 21, 22, 23. *Wo to thee* Chorazin, *wo to thee* Bethsaida, *for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon, *they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for* Tyre *and* Sidon, *at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell*, &c. that is, because thou art highly advanced in spiritual privileges, and hast

Genitivus refertur super nominativum singularem importat eminentiam. Ut cœli cœlorum, i. e. *Altissimi. Et sic in Synonimis* ut iniquitas peccati; *i. e. maxime peccaminosa.* Sic caligo tenebrarum; *i. e. densissima.*

not improved them, thou shalt be destroyed with double destruction, and made utterly desolate. For as our Lord Jesus elsewhere concludes, This is *the condemnation*, that men live in sin under Gospel-light; *light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light*, Joh. 3. 19.

And besides, I might have added, that the torments of such will be the greater, because of the reproach and scandal which they bring upon Christ, and his ways. As they dishonour him *actively* by their own transgressions, so they give *occasion* to others to speak evil of him, and his service. For will wicked profane wretches be ready to say, when they see the haltings and hypocrisie of these carnal Professors: Lo, these are your Saints, that would be accounted more precise than others: Here is their Religion, and such they are all of them, *and the like*. It is because of the blots and blemishes of these counterfeit Christians that the name of Christ is blasphemed, *Rom.* 2. 24. compared with *Ezek.* 36. 20, 23.

3. Their condition is sad, because of their more than ordinary inexcusableness in their eternal damnation. They will have no manner of Apology, or defence, to make for themselves; their mouths will be stopped to purpose: for indeed they are condemned of themselves. May Christ say unto them, if my service were evil, why did you call your selves my servants, and go under my name, and list your selves into my family? and if it be excellent indeed, why did not you serve me in truth and in sincerity? *Mat.* 22. 12. *When the King came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having*

a wedding garment? and he was speechless; q. d. Why didst thou associate thy self with such company, if thou wert resolved to continue in thy filthiness? what an impudent wretch art thou, to enter thy self into my houshold, and family, unless thou wert purposed to subject to the Laws and Discipline thereof? How couldst thou so shame rank thy self amongst believers, whilst thou liest polluted in thine impurity? *And he was speechless*; he was nazzled, as the word signifieth: he had not a word to say in his own defence: his own conscience silenced him. For as the Apostle arguetb, If the light of nature will render the Heathen inexcusable, and leave them without apology in the day of judgment, how much more inexcusable are those, who are brought within the pale of the visible Church of Christ, and yet will not have that man to reign over them? that call themselves Christians, and partake of the priviledges of Christianity, and yet serve the devil, and are of his Synagogue? *Rom.* 1. 20. compared with *Chap.* 2. 4. Their estate is sad, because of that vexation and horror, which the very reflection upon this thing will bring to their spirits everlastingly. How will the worm of conscience gnaw upon their hearts, from this very consideration? and the hypocritical wretches be ready to tear out their own bowels? When they shall bethink themselves, they were sometimes to Christ, and yet fell short of salvation by him: that they took possible a great deal of pains in the outward paths of Religion, to go on in a round of duties, so yet for want of truth and integrity in the inward parts, must lose the be-

Equidem quæ repetere injucundum obmutui.

nefit of all that ever they did: that they were not far off from the kingdom of God, and for want of going further, must perish amongst the devils, and damned for ever; and make their bed in hell according to that in *Luk.* 13. 28. *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see* Abraham, *and* Isaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your selves thrust out.* So much more will it bring vexation and anguish upon a mans spirit, when he shall see such an acquaintance of his got to heaven, that perhaps sate in the same seat with him, who was wont to meet at the same religious exercises with him, and himself excluded. When he shall find such an one received into *Abrahams* bosom, that possibly he far outstrip in commons gifts and qualifications; a poor broken-hearted sinner, whom he was apt to despise, and himself thrust into the chains of darkness amongst dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, amongst professed Atheists, and the profanest of men. What bitterness will this bring to a mans thoughts? *Oh friends*, think of this betimes, ere it be too late: and the Lord awaken your hearts, that you may not rest on this sort of a *seeming Union* with the Lord Jesus.

So much for the first branch of the distinction, viz. An Union with Christ by way of common profession, or external adhesion only.

2. There is an Union, or Onehess with Jesus Christ, by *spiritual implantation*, and Vivification. When not personally in him, so as to receive life and nourishment from him, as a quick fruit-bearing graff is in the stock, as a living member is in the body, and united unto the head. When a soul is not only set upon the foundation, but is also cemented

mented to it, by the cement of special grace: the peculiar work of the spirit of holiness. When he is a *lively stone* built upon the *living foundation*, as the holy Ghost expresseth it, 1 *Pet.* 2.4,5. *To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious; ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.* It is this sort of union which the Scripture mentioneth, as so great a mystery; and to which eternal life and salvation is annexed. He that [thus] hath the Son hath life. And *peace be to all them that are* [thus] *in Christ Jesus*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 14. This it is which we are enquiring into, wherein the nature of it consisteth, which I shall now enter upon the unfolding of, in the second answer to the question propounded, *By way of description.*

CHAP. IV.

Union with Christ described, and the parts of the Description opened.

2. HAving thus cleared our passage by the aforementioned distinction; come we now to lay down a brief description of this great privilege, or grace of Union with the Son, or having the Son: which I shall endeavour to explicate, in the several branches of it. Take the description thus.

Union with Christ is that special relation, which believers have to the Lord Jesus, as Mediator of the Covenant of Grace; arising from their close and intimate conjunction with him: whereupon they are accounted as one with Christ, their spiritual state is fundamentally

 changed,

changed, and the benefits of redemption are effectually applyed unto their souls.

In which Description, that we may handle it methodically, and so the more understandingly, you have these five branches into which it may be divided: that need each of them a little explanation.

1. The general nature of this grace, or priviledge; *It is a persons relation to the Lord Jesus.*

2. A note of difference, whereby it is distinguished from other relations. *It is that special relation, which they have to Christ, as Mediator.*

3. The subjects of this Union, unto whom it doth appertain: and they are believers. *It is the special relation of Believers to the Lord Jesus.*

4. The foundation of this Union whereupon it is bottomed, and whence it doth arise. Why, *it arisith from their intimate conjunction with Christ.*

5. The blessed consequents that flow from it, or the great effects which are produced by it. And they are three.

1. *Hereupon they are reckoned as one with Christ.*

2. *Their spiritual state is fundamentally changed.*

3. *The benefits of redemption are effectually applyed.*

1. The general nature of this grace or priviledge of Union with Christ. *It is a persons relation to the Lord Jesus.*] So (as I conceive) it may be most properly stiled: that mutual habitude or reference which is between them, or which Christ

and

and his people have one to the other. It is called in the Text, *an having the Son*; and it is frequently set forth by a being espoused or married to the Son, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. *For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chast virgin to Christ*. Rom. 7. 4. *That ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead*. Elsewhere it is called, *A belonging to Christ*, *Mar.* 9. 41. And a *being his*, *Gal.* 5. 24. You know, though there is a very neer conjunction, and oneness thereupon, between the Husband and Wife that are married together; yet it is but a relative oneness: their individual properties remain distinct, notwithstanding. Such is this Union of a sincere Christian with the Lord Jesus; they are contracted and married together, and so become united. For by such *umbrages* taken from external things, God is pleased to set forth this high mystery; that it may be better apprehended by us; that it may be easier let into our understandings.

Unio hoc est spiritualis illa relatio hominum ad Christum, quā jus acquirunt ad omnes illas benedictiones quæ in ipso præparantur. Amed. med.

Under this Head, I shall intreat you heedfully to mind and observe three things.

1. That this Union of the Saints with Christ, is not a transformation of either into the essence or substance of the other: either of Christ into theirs, or of Believers into his essence. They are not so made one as as if there were a substantial alteration, or commixtion therein: as if their persons or natures were so contempered together,

Nostra & ipsius [Christi] conjunctio nec misceat personas, nec confundit substantias: sed affectus consociat, & confederat voluntates.

as

as to be made up into one. A sincere convert is *one with the person* of the Mediator, but they are not thereby made *one person*: as some have vented their blasphemies, that they are Christed with Christ, and Godded with God, and such like expressions, that would make the heart of a sober Christian to tremble, and his ears to tingle at the mention of them. This oneness is not to be understood grossly and carnally, as the *Capernaites* mistook it, but in a spiritual sense, as Christ himself doth interpret it, *Joh. 6. 56, 63. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* How is this to be understood? *Mark v. 63. It is the spirit that quickneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak, they are spirit and life.* As if he had said, these things are to be taken in a spiritual sense, and not after a carnal manner. Indeed it is so undeniably evident, that it is not to be meant of a corporal union, that I shall not need to insist upon arguments for the confutation of such uncouth notions. Christ and a believer are not so made one, but that they retain their natures distinct, and their personal properties distinct, notwithstanding that union: they have different places, properties, and employments. Christ is corporally in heaven, *the heavens must contain him, till the time of the restitutions of all things*, and many of the members of his mystical body are still militant upon the face of the earth. He is the Redeemer, and they are the redeemed, *Act. 3. 21.* To the Lord Christ doth justly and deservedly

Loquitur me de externa ac transcuntes eorum istorum sonitu, sed de sensu illorum: Ac significat se non carnaliter de carnali christi sua esse, in quo vita non est, sed spiritualiter de spiritus vivificatoris virtute, in qua vita est, loquutum esse. Muscul. in loc.

servedly appertain all worship and homage, *All ye Angels of God worship him, Heb. 1. 6.* But it were monstrous and hateful idolatry, to give it unto the Saints, who are our fellow-creatures, *Rev. 22. 9. Acts 14. 13, 14, 15.* The Lord Jesus is ordained and constituted to be the Judge; and Believers are a part of the persons to be judged. It is true, they shall sit as *Assessors with Christ*, in passing sentence upon the wicked; but first they must stand themselves before the Judgment-seat, and receive their acquittal, *Act. 17. 31. Rom. 14. 10.* I might multiply passages of this sort, if it were needful. So that this Union is not a personal, or corporal oneness with Christ, but it consisteth in the meer relation which they have unto him.

2. Hence it followeth plainly by way of consectary; that it is a gross mistake of such persons who would gather from a Believers oneness with Christ, that they are perfectly freed from all remainders of sin. *Sin*, Christ is holy and pure, a Lamb without spot, and blemish, he never knew the least iniquity, so as to be tainted therewith in the smallest degree: but his Disciples and followers, whilst they are in their pilgrimage here, even the best of them, have much corruption* still abiding in their natures, and are under manifold imperfections. For their union with him is not a confounding of their beings, as if they were made one physical person with Christ; but is seen in their meer relation unto Christ. There hath been much poyson of late years vomited, by wretches of profligate principles,

* *Habitat peccatum in carnibus, sed non regnat, manet sed non dominatur: Evulsum quodammodo, sed non penitus ejectum: Mortuum, sed non prorsus ejectum.*

who

who turn the grace of God into wantonness. Let them commit never so many cursed abominations, yet they will plead that they sin not, because Christ is in them. But though Christ be in the godly (not in such whose heart walketh after their detestable things) and the godly are united to him in a spiritual way, yet they do not lose thereby their personal beings and operations. This oneness with the Son of God doth necessarily suppose a man freedom from the reign of sin, and the allowed practise of it; but it may stand together with the remainders of corruption; it is not altogether inconsistent with many failings and infirmities in the conversation, 1 *Joh.* 1. 6, 8. *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness* [if any sin be our way, and course, wherein we travel, and allow our selves] *we lie, and do not the truth.* And on the other hand, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.*

3. Remember this in the third place, that although we call this oneness of the godly with Christ, *their near relation unto him*; yet there is a great deal of reality in it. Christ and his people are united *truly*, and *verily*, though *not corporally*. You must not look upon this grace of Union, as if it were a bare notion and imagination, that hath its existence and being only in the fancies of men; but there is an oneness indeed, between the Lord Christ and his servants, *Joh.* 15. 1. *I am the true vine*: *q. d.* As truly as there is a *natural union* between the vine and the branches, so there is an *union spiritual* betwixt me and my Disciples. And again, *Joh.* 6. 55. *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* This is not a mere speculation, or the product of mens brains; it is not an *Entiti*-

tionis,

tionis, only fabricated and invented by the wit of man: but there is much truth and reality in the thing. Nay it is a very close and intimate Union. What expressions could be used of a fuller significancy than those, *Eph.* 5. 30? *For we are members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones.* But still understand it not grosly and carnally, but in a spiritual way and manner. *Relationes sunt minima, unitatis, maxima verò efficacia.* So there is a real ground on which it is bottomed, and many glorious effects produced by it: it is the inlet into all other Covenant-blessings, and hath much reality in it self.

That's the first branch of the description; As to the general nature of this grace, *It is a persons relation to the Lord Jesus.*

2. Here is a note of difference, whereby it is distingued from other relations unto Christ: therefore I call it, *That special relation which Christians have to him, as Mediator of the Covenant of grace*; as he is the Redeemer of Gods elect, and as they are persons knit unto him, that they may partake of the redemption which he hath purchased. Such a relation as is appropriated unto them that are sanctified, and whereunto the rest of the world are utterly strangers. As there are special qualifications put into the godly, and special work and service performed by the godly, so there are special priviledges conferred upon them: and this Union is one of those distinguishing priviledges; whereby they have relation to Christ, as he is the Redeemer that cometh to *Zion*, *Isa.* 54. 5. *Fear not, for thy Maker is thine Husband, and thy Redeemer, the holy one of* Israel, *the God of the whole earth he shall be called.* For the right apprehending of my meaning herein, you must observe, that there

there is a threefold relation which the children of men may be said to have to the Lord Christ: and upon each of them (*in a sense*) to be in him.

There is the relation of	1. Creatures. 2. Men. 3. Saints or Christians.	to Christ as	The eternal God. The Son of man. The Mediator of the Covenant of grace.

1. There is the relation of creatures to Christ, as the eternal God; of the same essence and substance with the Father, and equal unto the Father: by whom they were made and preserved, from whom they received their being and continuation in their being. For *Sirs*, as Christ was appointed to transact matters with the Father, so he is coessential and coequal with him; *God blessed for ever, Rom 9. 5.* As in respect to his incarnation, he was born in the fulness of time; so upon the account of his divine nature, he is the *Father of eternity, Isa. 9. 6. The man that is Gods fellow, Zech. 13. 7.* As he came to be the Saviour of the world, so by him the world was made, and all things therein, and by him they are upheld, *Joh. 1. 1, 3. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made, Heb. 1. 3. He upholdeth all things by the word of his power.* Now from hence doth arise a relation unto Christ, as creatures are related unto the Creator; as dependent beings unto that infinite Majesty upon whom they have dependance. And; the holy Ghost stileth it a being in him, as the effect is in

Causa	*Procreans* / *conservans*	*que dat* *Esse* / *Porro* / *Esse.*

in the cause, both of creation and conservation; *Act.* 17.28. *For in him* † *we live, and move, and have our being.—For we are all his off-spring.* This relation is common to the vilest of people, nay to the very devils. There are some poor ignorant souls delude themselves from hence; they hope God will save them, because he made them: Will Christ damn his creatures, the workmanship of his hands? it can never enter into their hearts to believe it. But *O vain man*, if thou continuest ignorant or unregenerate, and walkest in a course of ungodliness, God that made thee will shew no mercy towards thee, Christ that formed thee will send thee to hell, *Isa.* 27.11. God may refuse to own thee for the creature that he made; he made thee holy, and thou hast corrupted thy self: He made man upright, but he hath sought out many cursed inventions, and made himself a child of the devil. Besides, this is none other ground than the devils may have to expect salvation: Thus they are related to Christ; *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and in him all things consist*, Col. 1.16, 17. τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκε.

† Or *by him*, as it may be rendred. For I understand nothing farther by this insistence, than, *Deprehendit creatura à creatore, tam in esse quam in operari.*

2. There is the relation of men to Christ as the Son of man: As he humbled himself to take the form of a servant, and to assume our nature, and not the nature of Angels. And indeed such a one it was necessary our Mediator should be: As it was requisite he should be God, that his obedience and

sufferings

sufferings might be of value sufficient to content and satisfie the demands of the justice of God: so likewise that he should be man, that he might be capable of subjection unto the Law, and undergoing the penalty of the Law, *Gal.* 4. 4. *Heb.* 10. 5. As it was necessary he should be God, that he might be able to vanquish and subdue our spiritual adversaries; so also that he should be man, that he might taste death for the children of men, which was the way appointed for that conquest to be made, *Heb.* 2. 14. As it was needful he should be God that he might be a prevalent high Priest: so likewise that he should be man, that he might be a merciful high Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, *Heb.* 2. 17. And from hence doth arise a relation to him, a kind of identity or oneness with him, as between beings of the same nature. Thus the Apostle saith they are one, specifically one, in respect of his humane nature, *Heb.* 2. 11, 16. *For he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all of one.* That is, of the same stock, and linage; the children are partakers of flesh and blood, and he took part of the same. For *v.* 16. *Verily he took not upon him the nature of Angels, but he took upon him the seed of Abraham.* But still this is a relation which is common to the just and the unjust, to them that fear the Lord, and to them that despise him. Indeed the benefit of it re-

Si enim homo non vicisset inimicum hominis, non justè victus esset inimicus. Rursus autem nisi Deus donasset salutem, non firmiter haberemus eam. Et nisi homo conjunctus fuisset Deo nostro, non potuisset particeps fieri incorruptibilitatis. Oportuerat enim Mediatorem Dei & hominum, per suam ad utrosque domesticitatem, & ad amicitiam & concordiam utrosque reducere; & facere ut Deus assumeret hominem, & homo se daret Deo. Iræn. adv. hæres.

redoundeth only to such as are sanctified; For what advantage is it to thee, that Christ was the Son of man, if thou lieest still in the gall of bitterness, and art a slave to the devil? But the relation it self extends to all the generations of mankind. They are the children of men, and Christ was found in fashion as a man, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8. they are of the humane nature, and so was Christ; being the seed of the woman according to the flesh; *Gen.* 3. 15, 16.

3. There is a peculiar relation of Saints and sincere Christians to Christ, as the Mediator and Redeemer; God and man in one person: as members are related to the Head, or the Spouse to the Husband. A saving relation to him; whereby they have a right and title to what Christ hath done and suffered, and an interest in the mercies procured thereby: such a relation is this Union we are speaking of. The Apostle doth evidently put a difference betwixt this and the former, *Col.* 1. 16, 17. 18. *By him were all things created, &c: and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church*; q. d. It is true, Christ is the Lord and Soveraign of the whole Creation, men and Angels and devils: but his own people have a peculiar neerness unto him, he is the head of the body, the Church. And the beloved Disciple mentioneth it as a differencing privilege, 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. 20. *We know that we are of God, dear children, and the whole world lieth in wickedness: And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.* Mark it, *we are in him*, others are not; we who are born of God have a share in this signal mercy, whereof the rest

of the world are not sharers. This leadeth us to the third branch of the description, which is,

3. The subjects of this Union, to whom it doth appertain; why to believers. *It is the special relation which believers have to the Lord Jesus* that is, sound believers, which are made partakers of the faith of God's elect: such as are *Israelites* indeed, and Christ's Disciples and followers in good earnest, *Col.* 1. 2. *To the Saints and faithful brethren in Christ.* You know, there are Disciples of Christ in appearance, and others who are such in truth; who have not only the shew, but the substance of Religion: that do not only call themselves servants of Christ, but are stedfast and faithful with him, *Rev.* 17. 14. And these are the persons who are in him. It is for them only he prayeth, that they might be one with him; and therefore unto them peculiarly doth this priviledge belong, *Joh.* 17. 20, 21. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their word. That they all may be one, as thou father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* Mark it, it is affixed to Believers, *that they may be one in us.*

How are Believers the subjects of this union? I answer, on a fourfold account.

1. Solely, and exclusively.
2. Universally, and comprehensively.
3. Entirely, and undividedly.
4. Formally, under that respect, as Believers.

1. Believers are the subjects of this Union, *solely and exclusively*: It is a part of the hidden Manna, which none taste of but Gods hidden ones, as believers are called, *Psal.* 83. 3. Carnal Professors have no lot nor portion in this matter; they may enjoy

great

great advantages by having their station in the Church, but only real Saints, and such as are regenerate, are ingrafted into Christ, the head of the Church. God doth give forth some spiritual mercies promiscuously & indifferently, to the good and bad, to the righteous and wicked; but there are other priviledges peculiar unto the righteous; and this of implantation into Christ is one of them, whereby he doth manifest himself unto his own, and not unto the world. How can this be, saith Judas (not Iscariot) *How is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not unto the world?* Joh. 14. 22. and mark our Saviours answer, v. 23. *Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*; q.d. We will be united and knit to such a one, and thereupon maintain a constant communion and intercourse with him: which is a way of the manifestation of ourselves, which the world knoweth not of. The world is shut out of Christ's prayer for this mercy, and it is confined to believers, *Joh.* 17. v. 9. compared with v. 21.

2. It belongeth to believers, *Universally and comprehensively*; that is, to all of that sort and number, whether they are weak Christians or strong; whether they are more eminent in the Church, or of a lower esteem. My brethren, this grace of Oneness with Christ, is not a dignity conferred upon some eminent Saints, whereby they are advanced above their fellows; but this honour have all the Saints. If there be true justifying faith, but as a grain of mustard-seed (as our Saviour speaketh in another case) it putteth a man into the possession of this priviledge. It may be the comfort of the mean-

est and poorest of the people of God upon earth; that however men despise them, yet they are married to the King of Kings, to the only begotten Son of God. You read of *babes in Christ*, who are the lowest rank of Believers, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, It may be improved as a point of wonderful consolation by poor drooping souls that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity: When your corruptions struggle within you, and you are violently assaulted by temptations from without, and thereupon are afraid how you shall be able to hold out, and to keep on in the way of godliness: when your spirits are ready to sink under your burdens; indeavour to raise them up again with this meditation: The Lord Christ is my Husband, why should I fear? He is ingaged to preserve me, for I belong to him, nay I am in him. See and study, *Isa.* 40. 27, 28, 29, 30.

3. This Union appertaineth to Believers *entirely and undividedly*. My meaning is this, the whole persons are the subjects of this Union, and every part of them: not only their souls, the spiritual and immortal part, but their very bodies which are made of the dust of the earth. For, as the grace of *Union* or sanctification where it is poured out upon a person, it maketh an entire change both in body and soul: so doth the grace of *Union* reach to the whole man, to the body as well as to the soul, 1 *Cor.* 6. 15. *What, know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?* q. d. This is a known truth, a foundation principle, you must not be ignorant of it; you should be well instructed in this Point, that you may be careful not to defile your bodies; that it may quicken you to glorifie Christ with your bodies, as well as with your spirits, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. At the resurrection the bodies of the Saints shall

shall be fashioned and made like to Christ's glorious body; and here upon earth they are knit to his person.

4. Believers are the subjects of this Union *formally*, that is, under that very consideration, as such: *quatenus* Believers. For the grace of faith is the principle which God doth peculiarly honour in this very business; to make up our union with Christ; or to knit a person and the Lord Jesus together. *Whom he hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, Rom.* 3. 25. And therefore our Apostle applyeth the doctrine of my Text, unto them that believe, in the words immediately following, *v.* 12. *He that hath the Son hath life, &c.* And *v.* 13. *These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that ye have eternal life.* How should Believers know it hereby? Why, because Believers have the Son; by believing they are in the Son; *eo nomine*, because they believe.

That's the third Branch of the description, the proper subjects of this Union, *viz.* Believers.

4. Here is the foundation of this Union, on which it is bottomed: and from whence it doth arise; namely from their intimate conjunction with Christ. *It is that special relation which Believers have to the Lord Jesus, arising from their intimate conjunction with him.* Or, from the closness of their being joyned together. This is well to be observed, as a material point; for first there must be *unition* (as one noteth) before there can be *Union*. First, they must be brought together, and must be linked and fastened one to the other, before they can become one together. At least in order of nature, conjunction must precede; for Union doth

result or flow from it, and hath a necessary dependance thereupon. As it is in marriage, the great resemblance for illustration of this mystery, First, the man and woman are brought together, and married one to the other, and thence their union doth arise; they become one flesh. So it is in this spiritual grace, first Christ and a Believer are joyned together, and then they become one. This conjunction is so close and intimate, that it is called a being glewed unto Christ, so the word signifieth

1 Cor. 6. 17. *He that is joyned* [* or glewed] *to the Lord, is one spirit.*

* κολλωμενος. Qui (Domino) agglutinatur. à κόλλα glutin.

First they are joyned, and so become one spiritually. How this conjunction is wrought, I shall open at large, in answer to the next question. This is the fourth branch of the Description.

5. *Lastly*, You have the blessed consequents which flow from hence, or the glorious effects produced hereby, and they are especially three. 1. Hereupon they are accounted as one with Christ. 2. Their spiritual state is *fundamentally* changed. 3. The benefits of redemption are effectually applyed.

1. *Hereupon they are accounted as one with Christ.* Being made so, they are reckoned and esteemed as such; and accordingly made partakers of whatsoever advantage doth accrew thereby, and doth grow upon this root of Oneness with the Mediator. It is not an empty name, and an airy appellation, which is hereby attained: but believers are answerably esteemed and dealt with, in all sorts of dispensations. Therefore they are said to be found in him. *Philip. 3. 9. That I may win Christ, and be found in him*; that is, in all the dealings of God towards them,

them, they are looked upon as one with his Son: so their concernments are regarded, and blessings are dispensed unto them: evils are averted, and kept from falling upon them, and spiritual good things are given forth. When God doth go forth in his providence towards the children of men, he findeth the wicked in their sins; polluted in their blood, under the curse of the Law, and so there is a curse interwoven with his proceedings with them: but when he looketh down upon Believers, they are found *in Christ*: They are reckoned as one with the Redeemer; and that in a fourfold respect.

1. God the father doth so account of them, in his estimation. He putteth an high price and value upon their souls: he loveth them with a superlative love, as being one with his Son: they are sharers in the same love wherewith Jesus Christ is beloved. It is true, in themselves they are despicable creatures, of a mean extraction and original, and God might refuse to have any regard to them; in respect of their Apostacy, they are polluted creatures; and so the Lord might abhor them: but he takes a view of them in his Son, and so his affections run out towards them, *Joh.* 17.23. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know, that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.* Not in point of equality, but similitude: with the same love, with a real love, pure love, eternal love, unchangeable love. And he will glorifie them with the same glory, wherewith Christ is glorified.

Dein'e celestis Pater eodem quo Ecclesia caput amore complexus est, membra quoque omnia prosequitur, ut neminem diligat nisi in Christo. Mark.

2. The Lord Jesus himself doth so account of them, in the care which he taketh of their persons, and affairs. He hath a tenderness for them, and a watchful regard unto them, as parts and portions of himself. Whoso toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye, *Zech.* 2. 8. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, *Isa* 63. 8, 9. And whatever kindness is shewed unto them, is a refreshment to his spirit. Mind how he speaks to *Peter*, *Joh.* 21. 15, 16. *Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, feed my lambs.* And *v.* 16. *Feed my sheep*: And again *v.* 17. *Feed my sheep*: as if he had said, Thou canst no way better express thy love towards me, than by being tender of those that are my servants. Whatever thou dost for them, for the least of them, I will put it upon mine account: I reckon it as done unto my self.

3. The holy Ghost, the spirit of grace and consolation, doth so demean himself towards Believers, in his operations, and workings upon their hearts. As he cometh to them in Christ's name, so he dealeth with them as Christ's members. He taketh of his, and doth shew it (or communicate it) unto them: because they are parts of him, *Joh.* 16. 14, 15.

4. Their fellow-servants, all the sons and daughters of *Adam*, are warned of God, thus to judge concerning them; and accordingly to suit their carriage and actions towards Believers. They are apt to reckon them as the dung of the earth, as the off-scouring of all things, as the most contemptible persons under the Sun: but God will have them to know, that they are one with Jesus, *Joh.* 17. 23. *That the world may know, that thou hast sent me,*

me, and hath loved them as thou hast loved me. The world] that is the inhabitants of the world; or principally in this place, the wicked of the earth: it is a lesson wherein it concerneth them to be instructed. That's the first general consequent of this Union. Being one with the Son of God, they are to all intents and purposes so accounted of.

2. The second general effect of this Union with Christ, is the change of a mans state and condition. *Hereby their spiritual state is fundamentally changed*] to that of children of the wrath of God, they are made objects of his favour, and delight, and complacency: in whom he takes pleasure. Instead of the curse of the Law under which they lay, they are put within the verge of the Covenant of peace and reconciliation: instead of fire-brands of hell, they are made heirs of a crown of righteousness. You know there is a threefold change wrought upon a person, in order to conduct him to eyeslasting bliss. 1. There is a change of the nature, and qualifications of the person: the frame and temper of the heart must be altered, and turned from sin to holiness; from the power of Satan to the living God. 2. There is a practical change in the conversation, from living after the flesh to a walking in the Spirit, and minding the things of the Spirit. 3. A change of the state and condition, which we are now treating of; and this is fundamentally wrought by a mans union with Christ. This change of the state is stiled in the Scriptures, *A translation of a finner out of the kingdom of Satan, into the kingdom of Christ*, Col. 1. 13. And by the grace of union this translation is originally made and brought about. Mark, I say, *originally and fundamentally*; for although justification and adoption are a

change

change likewise in the state of a sinner, yet I ascribe it *originally* to union with Christ; because those mercies are rivolets which flow from this fountain. And you will find the holy Ghost attributing it hereunto, *Eph.* 2. 13. *But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* The state of nature is a state of alienation and estrangedness from God, then sinners are afar off from his favour and the light of his countenance: but when they are implanted into Christ, this alienation is removed, and they are brought nigh unto God. This is a point of very great weight and moment, and therefore diligently to be heeded and studied. So that I will open it somewhat largely for these three reasons.

1. Because upon the change of the spiritual state of our persons, doth depend the gracious acceptation of all our duties and performances. This being the constant method of God's acceptance of them, first he hath respect unto the person, and then to the spiritual work and obedience which is tendered by that person? *Gen.* 4. 4. *The Lord had respect to* Abel, *and to his offering.* First to himself, and then to his sacrifice. *Ezek.* 20. 40, 41. *I will accept you, with your sweet savour.* First you, and then your sweet savour thereupon. It is not all the care and pains a natural man can take in some of the duties of the worship and service of God, though he mean never so well (as some persons will boast, they mean well and have good intentions, and therefore hope the Lord will not reject them) that will render his duties pleasing unto God,

* *Deus non habet gratum offerentem propter munera, sed munera propter offerentem.* Gregor.

? Ἐκδέξομαι ὑμᾶς εὐωδίας.

God, except he first give up himself to be the Lords, and be in covenant with him, and his spiritual state be changed, *Rom. 8. 8. They that are in the flesh, cannot please God.* * Not only they will not, but cannot: it is a thing utterly impossible, that God should take delight in the works of the wicked, who are his enemies: let them be never so zealous and forward in his worship. Such actions may less displease the Lord than some others, but at the best he cannot take pleasure in them. And therefore the whole stress of the matter is laid upon the state of a man, *Prov. 21. 27. The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination; how much more when he brings it with a wicked mind?* Mark it, though he come with a good intent and mean well (as there is a kind of natural integrity) yet it is an abomination. This is plainly intimated; if he come with a wicked mind, making the duties of religion a cloak to cover his other horrid impieties, then his sacrifice is most odious and abominable; but however he cometh, it is an abomination. Why? because the person sacrificing is a wicked, ungodly sinner, and the Lord judgeth mens actions by their state.

* Qui in carne sunt, i. e. per spiritum renati non sunt. Buling.

This is a matter seriously to be weighed, because the greatest number of persons, who call themselves Christians, do seldom or never think of it. They go on in sin and perish eternally, for want of laying to heart this very thing. And therefore we should give diligence the rather to study it; because it is neglected by the most. You may observe it as an ordinary thing with carnal people, when conscience is a little awakened, when they are brought into distress by sickness, or some other

sore

sore affliction; they will cry out with a kind of bitterness for their evil wayes, and seemingly melt with sorrow for some actual miscarriages; but not one of many will mind his spiritual state. Thus it was with *Micah* the Idolater, when he heard his mother curse and ban for the mony that was stollen from her: these curses startled his conscience, and made him to vomit up the sweet morsel wch he had swallowed down: he minds that *wicked action*, but never once considers his *spiritual condition*; and so goeth on in other sins, notwithstanding, *Judg.* 17. 2, 3, 5. Thus *Saul* was troubled, in a reflection upon some of his evil wayes; and profane *Esau* grieved because he had displeased his Father by his sinful actions: but scarce one of an hundred crieth out of his said condition. Nay commonly they are so far from it, that they will be ready to fly in a mans face, that doth but make mention thereof. When you have convinced a wicked man of his evil life, and brought him to an acknowledgment of a course of sin, wherein he walketh: if thence you begin to speak of his estate in sin, of his being an enemy to God, a child of his wrath, and a wicked person, he will defie the words. No, will he say, I love the Lord, and God knows my heart is good, *and the like*. See how fowl they fell upon Christ, for touching upon this string; When he told them of their wretched condition that they were not of God, but of their father the devil: *Thou art a Samaritan*, say they, *and hast a devil*, Joh. 8. 44. 47. 48. They could not endure he should meddle with this matter.

37. It concerneth you to be well instructed and settled in this particular of your spiritual state Godward; because when the spirit of conviction doth powerfully

powerfully prevail upon a mans heart, so as to turn him effectually from sin, and so bring him to a sound and sincere conversion, it doth ever end in *conviction of the state of sin.* As conviction usually beginneth in some particular actual wickedness, so it alwaies endeth in a discovery of that wicked and damnable condition, into which the sinner is brought. Thus it was with *Paul, Rom. 7. 9. For I was alive without the Law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died;* that is, I saw my self dead, and undone: I found that I was in a perishing condition, that unless the wonderful grace of God step in for my deliverance, I must perish and be lost irrecoverably. Before I had a good conceit of my self, as to my state and condition, however conscience might now and then check me for some failings and actual miscarriages, yet I was alive, without the Law, *i. e.* before I had a clear understanding of the Law, in my own apprehension I was a child of life, I thought my self sure of salvation: but when the commandment came in the life, and power, and vigorous workings of it, I found I was stark dead. So in the return of the Prodigal, mark how far the conviction proceedeth, *Luk. 15. 17. I perish.* Not only I am a disobedient Son, that have run away from my father, and wasted my Patrimony, but if I continue in this condition I am undone for ever. This is the spirit of bondage, which the Apostle were undone is as the forerunner of the spirit of adoption, *Rom. 8. 15. You have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.* Marke, not again, imaginating

timating that once they had received it, that all who are savingly converted must first be under it. When is the holy Ghost a spirit of bondage? *Why*, when he doth discover to a mans soul his wretched and miserable condition: when he doth not only shew him his work wherein he hath exceeded, but doth also make him sensible of the lost estate wherein he is involved: when he causeth a sinner to see that he is a child of the wrath of God, bound over to answer to the demands of the justice of God, obnoxious to the everlasting and insupportable vengeance of the most high; and raiseth fears and terrors in the soul in apprehension thereof; so that he sees it necessary that his state be altered. The holy Ghost *Sirs* may be a spirit of conviction, as to sundry acts of sin, when he is not a spirit of bondage: for this relates to the state of sin: which is alwayes an antecedent to sound a conversion. And therefore, *as I said*, I will open this point of the change of a mans spiritual state in six particulars.

1. There is a twofold state or condition of mens souls, in reference to spiritual and eternal concernments. The state of nature, and the state of grace, as they are usually called. The state of condemnation, and exposedness to the wrath of God: and the state of favour and reconciliation with the Lord. That of alienation from God, and that of friendship and fellowship with him. A state of service to the Lord, and of slavery to the devil: Of liableness and obnoxiousness to everlasting death, and the state of heirship, and title to the kingdom of heaven. You read often of them in the Scripture, *Job*, 3. 18. *He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already*. So *Rom.* 6. 17, 18.

6. 17, 18. *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin.* There's the state of nature. And v. 18. *Being then made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness.* There's the state of grace, *Eph.* 2. 19. *Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and strangers* [that's the state of alienation from the Lord] *but fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the houshold of faith* [this is that of friendship and communion with God.] That is the first thing to be noted, as to this matter.

2. These two estates as to matters of salvation and condemnation, are comprehensive of all the posterity of mankind; without exception of any. They do take in the whole compass of the children of men. My meaning is this, that there is no middle condition: there is not a man or woman upon the face of the earth, but must of necessity fall under one of these two ranks. Either he is a Saint and servant of God, or a vassal and slave to the devil: either he is an heir of heaven, or a firebrand of hell. And, *pray Sirs*, let us apply it diligently unto our selves, and often say in our hearts; One of these two is the condition of my soul: if I am not a child of God, and in covenant with him, it will necessarily follow that I am a child of the devil; for there is no third estate. If I be not sanctified and called to be a Saint, it cannot otherwise be, but that I am in the gall of bitterness; and if I die in this condition, I drop immediately into hell. As there are but two places into which all nations shall be sent at the end of the world, *viz.* heaven and hell; the place of eternal life, and that of everlasting punishment: so there are but two states in which all are comprized during their abode in the world; either they are Gods friends,

or

or his adversaries: still in their sins, or delivered from their sins, 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.* The whole world] that is all other persons besides us, of what rank and quality soever. And that is a pregnant Text, *Eccl.* 9. 2. *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner: and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.* Mark it, all people in the world are cast by the holy Ghost into two ranks, or companies: either they are righteous, or wicked: clean, or unclean; good, or sinners. There is no middle condition, or state of neutrality, upon a spiritual account. And indeed there is strong evidence of it, from the reason and nature of the thing: because the distinction which is between these two estates, is such as we call a difference of contradiction in some respect, such as is between the negation and affirmation of the same thing; which cannot possibly admit of any third or middle estate whatsoever, * *Joh.* 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Mark it, here is a difference of contradiction, betwixt believing and not believing. You cannot possibly pitch upon a man, but either he believeth on the Son

* If you will rather say, they are *privativè opposita*, yet the argument holds good: for such admit not a middle in *subjecto capaci*.

Oppositorum duorum privativè cum unumquo inest, necesse est alterum inesse susceptibili. Aquin.

Privatio enim est circa eandem genus contradictionis. Alex. de Ales.

and

and so is in the state of grace; or he believeth not on the Son, and remains in the state of wrath. They who are regenerate and converted, have the promise of salvation, and such as are unregenerate and not converted, shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Here is a kind of difference of contradiction, between converted and not converted. And so I might instance in other qualifications. That is the second thing to be noted as to the change of a mans spiritual state.

3. Observe in the third place, That these two estates upon a spiritual account, are utterly incompatible, and inconsistent one with the other: and cannot upon any hand stand together. Plainly thus, they cannot both appertain to the same person, at the same time. It is altogether impossible that a man should be in the favour of God, whilst he is in league of amity with his corruptions: that he should be in the kingdom of Christ, and under the prince of darkness together. This is a truth so plain and obvious, at the first view, that one would think it should be needless to press it: But I insist upon it the rather, because there are secret workings in the hearts of the children of men, to the contrary. Their inward thoughts are that they may serve the Lord, and be subjects of the devil together: that they may be vain, and earthly, and sensual, and follow the course of the world; and yet be the people of God notwithstanding: That they may drink, and revel, and be wanton, and the like; and be in the state of salvation too. You shall find these are the secret thoughts and imaginations of mens spirits, *Mic.* 3. 10, 11. *They abhor judgment, and pervert equity; they build up* Zion *with blood, and* Jerusalem *with iniquity: The heads*

 thereof

thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for mony: Yet they will lean upon the Lord, and say, is not the Lord amongst us? They flatter and sooth up themselves, that they were servants of *Jahovah* the God of heaven, although they served divers lusts and pleasures; and turned aside into crying wickednesses: that the Lord was on their side, and they belonged to him, though they openly espouse the interest of sin. But alas *Sirs*, it can never be; these imaginations are vain and sottish. *Mark* how peremptorily our Saviour asserteth the contrary, backing that assertion with forcible argument, *Mat. 6. 24. No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and Mammon*; *q. d.* It is a sottish thing to entertain such a fond conceit, as if you could join both interests together: The Laws of Christ and the commands of sin, are diametrally opposite one to the other: if the affections run towards the one, they must of necessity be withdrawn from the other; nay set against the other; for they are directly contrary. And besides, where God accepteth of the heart, he will have the whole heart: where he is served truly, he must be obeyed entirely and universally, with the whole soul. So that never dream of such a thing, as making a commixtion of these two; It is as easie to joyn together light and darkness, heaven and hell; as to make a conjunction between righteousness and unrighteousness, between Christ and *Belial*. The words of *Joshua* are very pertinent to this purpose, when the people seemed to promise so affectionately and resolvedly, that they would serve the Lord, *Jos. 24. 19. And Jo-*

shua

thus *said unto the people, ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is an holy God, he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins*; that is, unless you forsake your corruptions, you cannot; except you detest and cast off your idols you cannot; whilst you are in confederacy with sin, and before you have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, you cannot be the Lord's servants. He is an holy being, who will have no communion with the workers of iniquity. Perhaps you will walk in sin, and hope to make amends for all by crying to God for forgiveness; you will swear, and curse, and ly, and defraud, and commit adultery, and profane the Sabbath, and cry God forgive me: But *Sirs*, he is a jealous God, and will not forgive you; as long as you go on in a course of impenitence, he will never pardon your transgressions. Possibly you will walk, as the generality do, in the vanity of your minds, and wallow in all sorts of uncleanness and filthiness, and then call upon God to have mercy on you: Alas poor souls be not deceived, He will *not be merciful to any wicked transgressor*, *Psal.* 59. 5. So that whilst you serve sin, you cannot serve the Lord. That's the third thing to be noted.

4. Remember this withal, That the state of all persons by nature, as they are in themselves, and as they came into the world, is an accursed estate: a state of utter estrangedness from God, and of liableness to the indignation of the Almighty. *Mark*, I say, this is the condition of all persons, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, learned or unlearned, whatever priviledges they enjoy, and wheresoever their lot is cast; this is their state by nature, to be under sin, *Rom.* 3. 9. *What then? are we better*

then they? No in no wise, for we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; q. d. Is this the sad condition of the heathen, and of the infidel world only, to be under the guilt of sin and the curse of the Law? No, it is the condition of every Son and daughter of *Adam*. Are the Jews, we that are visible members of the Church, in a better state than others in this respect? No, we are all involved in the same wretched condition. There is not a person amongst us, but may lay his hand upon his heart, and appropriate it to himself, and say, this was my condition: and if I have nothing to plead for my exemption, besides my birth priviledge, the name of Jew or Christian, and the like; this is my condition, *to be under sin*. Not only to be tainted with sin, but under sin, *i. e.* under the guilt of it, and under the condemnation due to it. All the posterity of mankind are by nature condemned persons, in a damnable estate: and if God should take them away in that condition, they would be actually damned and perish for ever. Sin would lie upon them, and they would fall under it, and so it would sink them irremediably into destruction. O my brethren, how infinitely doth it concern us to prove that we are renewed and born again! for as we came into the world, this is the estate of all of us, *to be under the curse*. both of my soul who speak, and of thy soul that hearest or readest these things. Certainly, if any man upon earth could have freed himself from being involved herein, it might have been *Paul*; who had as much to plead as any, *Phil.* 3. 5, 6. *He was circumcised the eighth day*, that is, according to the ordinance of God, he was solemnly admitted into the visible Church: *Of the stock of Israel*, to whom

whom pertained the adoption, and the Covenant, and the giving of the Law, and the promises: *He was of the tribe of Benjamin*, not of one of the ten tribes who fell away so grosly to idolatry, but of them who retained the true worship of God, when the others apostatized: *An Hebrew of the Hebrews*, that is, both his parents were *Israelites*, he was not descended of *Proselytes* on either side, but of native *Jews*, without any mixture of *Gentiles* in his linage. * Touching his profession, *He was a Pharisee*, he was of the strictest Sect amongst the people, of those who held fast many of the great truths of Religion, which the Saddnces and other Sects rejected: he was more Orthodox than some others. Lastly, for his practise, he was *blameless touching the righteousness of the Law*, that is, in the sight of men; they could lay nothing to his charge, they could not say black was his eye. And yet he includeth himself as wrapped up amongst others, in this cursed estate; he acknowledgeth himself to be a child of the devil, and led captive by him, till he got into Christ, *Eph.* 2. 1, 2, 3. *Amongst whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath even as others.*

* He that was born of a Proselyte either by Father or Mothers side was termed *Ben-ger* the Son of an He-proselyte, or *Ben-gera* the Son of a She-proselyte. But he who had both parents *Israelites* was an Hebrew of the Hebrews. *Godwin. Moses and Aaron.*

This is the fourth thing to be noted, That the state of all men by nature is a state of wrath.

5. For the conducting of a sinner to everlasting life, and glory, in the presence of God, and to make him for ever blessed in the enjoyment of

God, this state must be changed. They must be taken out of this condition, and put into another; namely into the state of grace. As there must be a *physical change* wrought upon the heart, so there must be a *relative change* in the state. For indeed *Sirs*, it will be the principal matter of Christ's enquiry at the day of accounts, in what state men are. He will divide the persons that come before him into companies, according to the state they are in; and pass sentence upon them answerably thereto, *Mat.* 25. 31, 32, 33. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.* Mark it, here is the great matter of enquiry, whether they are sheep, or goats; righteous, or wicked; in the state of grace, or still abiding in the state of nature. It is true, the Lord Christ will make an exact scrutiny into mens ways and carriage, *he will bring every work into judgment, and render to every one according to his deeds*: But those works will be lookt into, as an evidence of their state; and the nature and quality of the actions do much depend upon the state of the person acting. * So that if we would assure our hearts before Christ at his appearance, and comfortably expect to receive the reward of the inheritance, we must not think it sufficient to make a little reformation in our lives; but our spiritual state must be changed,

* *Itaque non quid fit aut quid detur, refert, sed qua mente. Quia beneficium non in eo quod fit aut datur consistit, sed in ipso dantis aut benefacientis animo.* Sen. de Benefic.

changed. Instead of strangers and enemies, we must be made the friends of the Lord; we must be taken out of Satans family, and put into the houshold of faith.

6. In the sixth and last place, to bring it home to our purpose, observe, that this change in a mans spiritual state is fundamentally brought to pass by his union with Christ: it is wrought by vertue of being ingrafted into Christ. Then is a sinner put into another state and condition, when he is broken off from the old stock, and put into the true vine: when he is taken out of the wild Olive, and inserted into the good Olive-tree. For *Sirs*, Christ is the head and master of the whole party of God's peculiar people; as Satan is the prince of the children of disobedience, so the Lord Jesus is the king of Saints, the Prince and Captain of their salvation to whom they belong; and when they are in him, then they belong to him, *Gal.* 3. 28, 29. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female* [that is, such things as these, Country, Sex, and Nation, or outward condition of life, make no difference on a spiritual account; but union with Christ, as it followeth] *but you are all one in Christ Jesus.* [one mystical body by vertue of conjunction with him] *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye* Abraham's *seed, and heirs according to the promise*; then is your state changed, from children of wrath to be inheritors of a kingdom.

That's the second general product or consequent of union with Christ. Thereby a mans spiritual state is fundamentally changed.

3. From hence doth redound a right to all the blessings of the Covenant. *Hereby the benefits of re-*

demption are effectually applyed to their souls.] So applyed, that believers have a title thereto, and may plead their interest therein: they may come unto the Lord with an holy boldness, and challenge those blessings as their own. They have not only liberty to pray for them as mercies which they want, but with an holy reverence and humility, they may put in their claim to them; when they are united unto Christ the Son of God. The very justice of God is ingaged to answer their suit, as well as his compassion. For *Sirs*, when a man is knit unto Christ, all things that are Christs do of right belong unto that man, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. *All things are yours, whether* Paul, *or* Apollo, *or* Cephas, *or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* Mark it, all things are yours; that is, in respect of title to them, and the benefit of them. Upon what ground is that title bottomed? why upon your oneness with Christ: therefore all are yours, because ye are Christs. As the interest which a woman hath in the goods and possessions of her husband, doth arise from her being united to the person of her husband: so the right which any have to the possessions of Christ, and the mercies which he hath purchased, doth flow from their oneness with the person of Christ. First, we must be his, before we have a right to any thing that is his. This is a known principle, That if we would receive any benefit by the redemption which Christ hath purchased, it must be applyed unto us: Now this application is made effectually by our oneness with Christ. It is the Spirit *by whom* the application is made, and union with Christ is the way

way *wherein* or whereby that application is made effectually.

And therefore you must observe, there are three wayes how the benefits of redemption are applyed to the souls of men and women.

There is an { 1. External and doctrinal, 2. Internal but conditional, 3. Effectual and saving. } application.

1. There is an external or doctrinal application, by the Ministers of the Gospel. When the general promise of salvation is particularly manifested unto us, and the tenders of life and happiness are made to our souls, by the Embassadors whom Christ employeth to that end. This is the great priviledge of such as have their standing in the visible Church. As there is eternal life procured through the blood of the Lord Jesus, so it is offered unto them. Christ doth beseech them by his Ministers to accept of it. The general promise of blessedness to all that believe, is brought home to them, and personally applyed unto them. This I call a *doctrinal Application*. Thus *Peter* applyed the grace of God unto the people, *Act.* 2. 38. *Then* Peter *said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Ghost.* Again, *Acts* 3. *v.* 19. *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.* Mark it, There is a general promise of pardon, to such as repent of sin and turn from it unto God, that iniquity shall never prove their ruine: Now this very thing the Apostle applyeth unto them, Repent ye, and you shall be pardoned; your sins shall be forgiven you; and when Christ shall

shall come at the day of judgment, which will be a day of gladness and refreshment to believers, then you shall be openly acquitted from your guilt; it shall be proclaimed in the face of all the world that you are pardoned and accepted. Thus *Paul* and *Silas* apply salvation to the Jaylor, *Act.* 16. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house.* There is an universal promise, that whosoever believeth shall be saved: Now say *Paul* and *Silas* to the keeper of the prison, Thou art not excluded out of this promise: by vertue of our commission from Christ, and in his name, we tender salvation to thee, and to thine house. This application doth oftentimes leave men as it found them; life and happiness is tendered, and they put it far from them, *Act.* 13. 46. *Mat.* 22. 2, 3.

2. There is an internal, but conditional application, of the benefits of redemption: and this is wrought by the Spirit of God dealing with a mans spirit. When the holy Ghost doth present unto the soul, what in the Ministery of the Word was founded in the ear. * When he doth take salvation in the offers of it, and lay it before the conscience; and doth press an acceptance of it upon the heart; and doth strive with men and women in order to a closure with it, upon Gospel-terms. This is sometimes called a knocking at the door of the soul, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him and he with me.* By the door understand the heart

* *Interna oblatio est spiritualis quædam illuminatio qua cordibus hominum proponuntur illæ promissiones quasi per verbum internum. Hæc etiam aliquando & quodammodo conceditur non electis.* Ames.

heart of a sinner, whereby entrance is made into the whole person, and possession took; as a man entreth into an house by the door: *the heart*, which is naturally shut against Christ, nay barred and bolted against him, by vain thoughts, and vile affections, and carnal reasonings; by pride and prejudice, and love of sin and the world: Now to this door Christ cometh by the Spirit, who acteth in his name, and *knocketh at the door*, that is, he doth argue and reason the case with mens souls, by his internal motions; that they would accept of salvation as it is offered. He doth expostulate with them, why they will be so foolish as to spend their time and strength in seeking after that which is not bread, and cannot satisfie? And in order to move them to turn to God, he doth set salvation before them, and assureth them of the enjoyment of it, if they will submit to the government of Jesus Christ. *If any man open the door I will come in unto him, &c.* This I call an internal-conditional application, because it is an inward work of the Spirit, treating with the heart of a sinner. And pray mind it *Sirs*, as it is a common thing, so it is a very dangerous thing to stand out against this application of eternal life. When the holy Ghost hath been dealing with a mans heart, convincing him of the necessity of closing with Christ, and he doth break through such convictions, God doth many times withdraw the very strivings of his spirit from such a sinner, and never dealeth with him further in order to his conversion, *Prov.* 1. 23. *Turn you at my reproof, behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.* It is the speech of Christ the eternal Wisdom of God inviting sinners to repentance; *q. d.* I do not only call upon you

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by my Word, but I will send the holy Ghost to treat with you: He shall speak over to your consciences what the Minister preacheth in your ears. And what is the issue of rejecting this work of the holy Ghost? See v. 24. and onward. *Because I have called and ye refused: I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my counsels, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind.* [That is, when judgments which you were afraid of shall actually seize upon you, and make you desolate: when the wrath of God shall fall down upon you suddenly, in a dreadful and terrible manner.] *When distress and anguish cometh upon you: Then shall they call upon me but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.* How is this to be understood, seeing God is always found of such as seek him in sincerity? Why the meaning seemeth to be this, God will withdraw his spirit, and deal with their hearts no further, and then they will grow hard and impenitent: and though they cry in their afflictions, yet it will only be the cry of hypocrites; such as the Lord will have no manner of regard unto. *O my brethren,* let this dreadful Scripture, and these awakening expressions, sink deep into your ears; that you may not dare to resist the holy Ghost, or to send him grieved away from you.

3. There is an effectual saving application of the benefits of redemption, when they are so applyed to us as to be made ours: so that we may say, this promise is a part of my heritage, and the other mercy is that which I have an interest in: And this

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is effected upon our union with Christ. When the holy Ghost doth not only shew us his excellency, and propound unto us salvation through his righteousness; but doth also mightily prevail upon us to come unto Christ, and we get into him; then we have a right to all that he hath to bestow upon the sons and daughters of men. First we must have the Son, and so a right to the inheritance by the Son, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Mark it, Then he is made so to us, when we are in him. It is one thing for Christ to be made wisdom, and righteousness, &c. *i.e.* to be set apart as the store-house of all these spiritual good things: and it is another thing for him to be made so *to us.* By vertue of God's commission, and the qualifications poured out upon the Lord Jesus, and that active and passive obedience undertaken and performed by him, he is made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: he is delegated to be God's high-steward or Treasurer for the giving out of these mercies: he is become the source and fountain of all saving grace. But when we are in him, he is made *wisdom to us*, and *righteousness to us*, and *sanctification to us*, and *redemption to us*: so that we are actually made partakers of them. These four things seem to comprehend the whole of the provisions made to conduct a sinner to glory. 1. Wisdom, for the revelation of the mind of God to us. 2. Righteousness, for our acceptation with the Lord. 3. Sanctification, for inabling us to walk as a peculiar people, and for carrying on the work of holiness to perfection. 4. Redemption, for our full deliverance from misery, and compleating our hap-

happiness. And all these are made over to us, by vertue of our union with him, our mystical oneness with Christ.

So much for opening the several branches of the Description; and for the second general Head, concerning the nature of this Union wherein it doth consist.

CHAP. V.

The manner how Christ and a Believer are united, cleared up in eight gradual Propositions. Six of them insisted on.

3. COme we now to the third principal Head, propounded to be handled: touching the manner of this Union, how it is brought about. The question is,

Qu. *How is this Union wrought, and accomplished? After what manner is this conjunction made up, whereby Christ and his people become one?*

Ans. I shall return answer to this question, by laying down and enlarging upon eight distinct and gradual Propositions. To which I must intreat your heedful and diligent attendance.

1. *Propos.* 1. The first Proposition is this, That all the children of men in their unregeneracy, before they are partakers of the differencing or special grace of God, are wholly separated from Christ, and meer strangers unto him. As they are afar off from God, by reason of their apostacy and declension from: so they are without Christ, by whom alone they can be brought back again un-

to

to the Lord. They can plead no share in his death and sufferings, or if they do plead it, they will be found guilty of usurpation: for they are without him in the world. This is clearly the doctrine of the Scripture, *Eph.* 2. 12. *At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of* Israel, *and strangers from the Covenants of promise.* At that time] that is, whilst you were dead in sins and trespasses, before you were quickned by grace according to the riches of the mercy and love of God, v. 4, 5. then ye were *without Christ*, not only destitute of the knowledge of Christ as Gentiles (though that seems to be the primary intent of the words) but without an interest in him because unconverted sinners. For what the Apostle speaketh of the Gentiles is true, in that sense, of all wicked ungodly persons whomsoever. There is no difference in that respect between Jews and Heathens; carnal Professors, and open Infidels. S. *Paul* plainly doth include himself, and such as he was before his conversion. And therefore in the day of grace, when the eternal love of God doth break forth towards his chosen people, they are said to be brought to Christ, and espoused unto him, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. When they are taught of God, they are drawn to the Son of God: when they have heard and learnt of the Father, then they come unto Jesus, *Joh.* 6. 44, 45. evidently implying, that before they had so learned, they were without Christ; and at a distance from him. That is the first Proposition.

2. *Propos.* 2. The sons and daughters of men in their carnal unconverted estate, over and above their distance and separation from Christ, are actually

ally knit and joyned unto such objects, as are wholly inconsistent with their Union with Christ.

I will instance especially in two things. They are { 1. In Covenant with sin. 2. Contracted to the Law.

1. They are in covenant with sin, and at league of peace with their corruptions: their spirits are glewed and fastened unto base lusts and pollutions. Though some remainders of sin abide in the hearts of the godly, whilst on this side of heaven, yet they are hated and abhorred, they are ever pursuing them unto death, and executing a kind of holy revenge upon them, and never satisfied till they are utterly vanquished and rooted up: But now an unregenerate person is under the dominion of sin, as an hired servant is under the command of his master; Pride bids him go, and he goeth; flattery biddeth him run, and he runneth; covetousness injoyneth him to do this, and he doth it: carnal fear requireth him to wound his conscience in this particular, and he woundeth it; uncleanness commandeth him to venture upon that provocation of the wrath of God, and he ventureth: as having given up himself to the obedience of sin. As the Lord saith of the *Israelites* of old, it is true, in its kind and measure, of all impenitent sinners; *They are joyned to their idols, Hos.* 4. 17. Sin hath a being and residence in the hearts of the dearest of Gods servants, but the spirits of the wicked are fast linked together with it. Such a one as *Paul* may be sold under sin, but *Ahab* sells himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, *Rom.* 7. 14. 1 *King.* 21. 20. Unconverted sinners yield up themselves

to

to be the servants of unrighteousness. You shall find that sin is as dear to a natural man, as the most useful members of the body: Hence it is that Christ compareth a mans beloved lusts to the right hand, and the right eye, *Mat.* 5. 29, 30. And hereupon it is that their hearts are so ready to rise up with indignation, and hatred against the means, which are made use of to rid them of their sins; and that sometimes they will not stick to be at a great deal of costs, and pains to retain their abominations. See what an offer they make, *Mic.* 6. 7. *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oyl? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* q. d. Let us keep our lusts, and we will stick at nothing, we will part with our Estates, and sacrifice our children, rather than abandon our bosom corruptions. Nay, how do many venture their lives (not to speak of their souls, which all of them willingly run the hazard of losing) for satisfaction of their lusts?

Now *Sirs*, this can never consist with our being joyned to Christ. * He will have no manner of fellowship with the workers of iniquity. The design of his coming was to destroy the works of the devil, and therefore he will not dwell with such as give up themselves to serve the devil; that make it their trade to promote his interest: these are the

* *In omnibus nobis regnavit peccatum--- unusquisque tamen habuit in se aliquem speciatim regem, qui in eo regnabat & dominabatur ei. Verbi causa, in alio regnum tenebat avaritia, in alio superbia, in alio mendacium regnabat; in alio libido dominabatur, & alius regem patiebatur furorem---Postea vero quam venit Jesus & occidit omnes reges qui in nobis tenebant regna peccati: praecipit nobis interficere omnes istos re-*

ges & nullum ex iis relinquere. Si quis enim aliquem horum in semet-ipso servaverit vivum, in exercitu Jesu esse non poterit. Si ergo regnat in te avaritia, si jactantia, si superbia, si libido, non eris Israeliticus miles, &c. Orig. hom. 15. in Jos.

persons whom his soul abhorreth. *What communion hath Christ with Belial?* 2 *Cor.* 6. 14. *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity,* Psal. 45. 7. Into a polluted soul Christ the wisdom of God will not enter, not will he take up his habitation with those that are in confederacy with sin. That's the first object to which sinners are joyned in opposition unto Christ.

2. They are contracted unto the Law, as it is a covenant of life; and are ready to seek for justification and acceptance upon legal terms; which is a strong bar in the way of union with Christ. For where the Lord Jesus is a Saviour indeed, he will be acknowledged as a perfect Saviour, he will have the whole glory of our redemption redound unto himself. See what the Apostle speaketh to this purpose, Gal. 5. 4. *Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law*; that is, if you seek to be justified by it; none are or can be justified by it in reality, but if you rely thereupon, and expect and look for acceptation with God upon those terms, you will undoubtedly fall short of the righteousnes of Jesus Christ: you do quite put your selves from under his shadow. If you rely upon the works of the Law, never think to receive benefit by the death of the Mediator of the covenant of peace and reconciliation: Christ is become of none effect unto you. Now *Sirs*, justification by works is mans natural element, upon which his soul is fixed, and where he delights to dwell. Although the Law is disabled to minister relief unto fallen sinners, yet there is a proness in them to follow

low after it still, and to rest their souls upon that foundation. This is plain from the pains the Apostle *Paul* taketh in his Epistles to unsettle men from this bottom, to take them off from leaning upon this broken reed: especially in his Epistles to *Rom.* and *Gal.* Besides, you read expressly of men desires to be under the Law, *Gal.* 4. 21. *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law*, q. d. I perceive that hitherward your spirits have a tendency, there is a natural inclination in you to split your selves upon this rock; as there is in a stone to descend downwards, towards its center. As the Law is *a rule of life*, so it is written upon the heart of a Believer: but unregenerate persons cleave to it as it is *a covenant of works*: they make use of it so, as to seek justification from thence. And this mostly arileth from that monstrous pride, which is fast rooted and rivered in mens hearts: they would fain advance something of themselves, and are loath to give the glory of their salvation to another. It is an harder thing to close with the grace of God, and to glorifie free grace in salvation, than most persons imagine. This is the second Proposition. That unconverted sinners are not only separated from Christ, but actually joyned unto such objects as are utterly incompatible with their being in Christ.

3. *Propos.* 3. Hence it clearly followeth as a third Proposition, That the first work which is wrought upon the spirit of a man, in order to his conjunction and oneness with the Lord Jesus, it is the separation or withdrawment of his soul from these objects, unto which he is joyned in opposition unto Christ. Till this work be done, the sinner is not in a meet capacity of having the Son of God, or being joyned to the Redeemer. First, a bill of divorcement

vorcement must be written, and the former husbands put away, before the soul can be married to another husband; to him that is raised from the dead. For *First*, Christ will not be a sharer with another: if he have the soul *at all*, he will have it *altogether*: if persons have the Son *really*, they must have him *only*. So that first the soul must be wrought upon to renounce those things which stand in competition with the Lord Jesus, that they may be in a preparedness to be knit unto him, *Psal.* 45. 10, 11. *Hearken O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy fathers house: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty.* They are words spoken of the mystical marriage betwixt Christ and his Church *: and they amount to thus much; *q. d.* If you will have Christ, you must forsake all things for Christ: if you will be joyned unto him, you must be parted from all besides him: as a virgin that will be espoused to an husband must forsake father and mother, and cleave to her husband. First you must be broken off from the old stock, if you will be ingraffed in the true vine. This is a special part of that self-denial which is required in the followers of Jesus, *Mar.* 8. 34. *Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself.* He must deny his *carnal self*, and say to his corruptions get ye hence: he must deny his *legal self*, by renouncing all confidence in the flesh, in his own righteousness, as to justification in the sight of God: he must be dead to sin, and the Law, if he will be married to the Son of God. See the proof of each.

* *Hoc de Ecclesiâ, quam ut Christi regis uxorem depingit— Videt de Christo esse sermonem qui enim de Salomone diceret: Quoniam ipse est Dominus Deus meus? Marian. in loc.*

1. He

1. He must be dead to sin, *Gal.* 5. 24. *They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* * Such as are united to his person, must be planted together into the likeness of his death: as he died for sin, so must they be dead unto sin: as Christ was crucified in the flesh, so must their corruptions be crucified in them. The principle or body of sin must be subdued, and the lustings and workings of it must be set against, else it will be in vain to pretend that they are knit unto Christ. 2. He must be dead to the Law: because it is impossible for a man to be coupled to both together. It was a defectiveness herein which was the cause of the utter undoing of the carnal *Israelites*: they were fast joyned unto the Law, and they could not be taken off from seeking life upon those terms; and therefore, though they followed after righteousness, yet they did not attain it, they fell short of righteousness. How came it to pass, that they fell short of what they sought after? Why, *Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law*, Rom. 9. 31, 32. That's the third Proposition. The first work that is wrought upon the spirit of a man, in a tendency to his conjunction and oneness with Christ, is the separation of his soul from sin, and the Law; to which he is naturally joyned in opposition to Christ.

4. *Propos.* 4. The divorce and separation of a sinner from his iniquity, which is of indispensable necessity to the reception of Christ, and union with him, is principally accomplished by a fourfold act. 1. The eyes of the understanding are opened, to

* *Carnem pro radice posuit, & concupiscentias pro fructibus. Caro enim est ipsa materia corrupta vitiositatis, unde illa omnia prodeunt.* Calv. in loc.

see the evil of sin. 2. The heart is awakened to consider the consequents of that evil. 3. The spirit is made to tremble, in apprehension of the danger of continuing in sin. 4. The grace of mortification is poured out, for the subduing of corruption, and a secret antipathy put into the soul against it. When this work is wrought, then the sinner is set free from bondage unto his lusts, and is at liberty to be married to another. I will briefly touch upon these four steps, or acts of the holy Ghost, whereby the divorce is made.

1. There is an act of *Conviction*, whereby the eyes of the understanding are enlightened, to see the evil of sin; and that with application to a mans self, and his own transgressions and iniquities. For indeed general notions of the evil of sin, will never have a due operation upon the heart and conscience*, unless it be brought home, by a personal and particular appropriation to a mans self. When a sinner is wrought upon so as to turn savingly from his iniquities, he is made to do it understandingly: God working upon a mans heart, answerably to mans nature. He doth not force him to cast off his sins against his will, but maketh him ready and willing to abandon them: and to that purpose, he giveth the sinner a sight of the guilt he is under. He maketh him to know what a contempt sin is of the Majesty of heaven, what a slighting of an holy, and just, and righteous Law; what a despising of the goodness and compassion of the Lord, and consequently a provocation of his wrath: that so there may be raised in the soul a regular abhorrence of it, and detestation against it: and the sinner may be willing

* *Generalia non pungunt.*

to

to sue out a divorce. Will the person think, when he is throughly convinced of sin, What a fool was I thus to serve these base lusts and pleasures? What madness possessed me, that I should depart from the Lord and follow after lying vanities? For mark it *Sirs*, When the affections act *regularly*, in closing with, or rejecting and refusing any spiritual object, there must alwayes precede a competent knowledge of the good or evil of that object. And the reason is plain, because the will and affections are blind and dependent faculties, they depend in their operations, upon the information of the understanding. So that the heart cannot hate the evil of sin, nor will the person loath himself upon the account of it, till the judgment be convinced of the nature and greatness of that evil. You read of this as one of the first works of the Spirit, *Joh.* 16. 8. *When the comforter is come, he will convince the world of sin.* He will make them to see clearly what an ugly deformed nature it is of, what a bitter thing it is to rebel against the most high. He will discover unto them the guilt which lieth upon their souls; and that by such evident concluding arguments, as will take away from them all excuses whatsoever, whereby they were apt to cover their transgressions: * and therefore it followeth, that he will convince them of their unbelief, which is the great damning sin, and that whereby other transgressions are fast bound upon the soul. To this end God doth sometimes bring the sinner into sore afflictions and tribulations; that he may thereby taste the bitterness and malignity of departing from him: which before was accounted

* Ἐλέγξει, i. e. πείσει, ἀντὶ τοῦ πείσει αὐτοὺς ἐλεγχθῆναι.

but a trivial matter, little to be regarded, *Job* 36. 8, 9, 10. *When they be bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth their ear also to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.*

Jer. 2. 19. * To this purpose, the holy Ghost doth set the Law before a mans face, in the spiritualness, equity, and excellency of it; that the sinner may behold himself in that glass, and pass judgment upon the evils of his heart and wayes, according to that rule. For *when the commandment cometh, then sin will revive indeed*, and be seen in its proper colours, *Rom.* 7. 9. Before, the person is mistaken concerning the evil of it, he reckoneth it a small matter, and wondereth that Ministers and Precisians should make such an ado against sin; because he judgeth of it by false rules: by the opinion which the generality of the world have concerning it; by the pleasure and worldly advantage that are attendant upon it, and the like: But *when the Law cometh* his mistakes are rectified, and he seeth sin as it is. And to this end the Spirit of God doth make discoveries unto the soul of the holiness, and purity, and infinite and spotless perfections of the nature of God himself, against whom sin is committed. *When Job saw the Lord, then he did abhor himself, as in dust and ashes, Job* 42. 4, 5. When *Isaiah* had a full sight of the infinite power, and holiness, and glorious perfections of God, then he cried out, *Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, Isa.* 6. 3, 4, 5. This is a certain rule, and if you will observe your hearts and demeanour, the truth of it

will

will every day further appear to you by experience That as your *apprehensions of God are*, so the manner of your *applications unto God* will be, and so your *apprehensions of the evil of sin* against God will be likewise. This is the first act in order unto a divorce from sin, An act of Conviction.

2. There is an act of *Consideration*, wherein the heart is awakened to weigh the sad consequents of the evil of sin: What will be the issue of these things? What will become of my precious and immortal soul, if I go on in this course? There is no way (thinketh the sinner) to escape the damnation of hell, without conversion: and the torments thereof will be endless and everlasting torments. If I am once cast into that lake, there is no deliverance out of it. Therefore you read of considering and turning from sin, *Ezek.* 18. 27, 28. *When the wicked turneth from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive: Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.* And the truth is, the reason why men and women do still hug their sins in their bosoms, and roll them as a sweet morsel under their tongues, is for want of consideration. If they did sit down and consult what would become of them: did they lay it seriously to heart, and revolve it in their thoughts, what precious souls their lusts are destroying, what insupportable wrath they are pulling down upon their heads, what rich grace they are abusing, what an incomprehensible Majesty they are setting against, and what a dismal condition it will, without a speedy repentance, reduce them unto; would they harbour sin any longer in their hearts? would

they

they not flie from it as from a Serpent? certainly they would cast it away with indignation, and say, Get ye hence ye filthy accursed lusts, you have brought me into a wretched estate, and should I follow you still, I must be undone forever, *Isa.* 47. 7. *Thou didst not lay these things to thine heart, neither didst thou remember the latter end of it.* As if the holy Ghost had said, the cause of your continuance in sin is want of consideration: if you had laid the end of it to heart, it would have put a stop to your carier in a course of impiety. This will appear in the return of the prodigal, *Luk.* 15. 17, 18. *When he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my fathers have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father.* When he came to himself] that is, when he entered into debate with his own spirit, * when he communed with his own heart, touching his deplorable condition: then he quickly resolveth to abide amongst the swine no longer, he will feed no more upon husks, he will rather be as the meanest servant in his fathers house, a door-keeper in the house of God; than dwell in the tents of wickedness. Before that time he gave up himself in subjection to his lusts, and did not consider what he was doing: he did not bethink himself, as the expression is 1 *Kings* 8. 47. *If they shall bethink themselves, and repent* This is the second act in order to a divorce from sin. An act of Consideration.

* *ut ueno tenet in se disputante.*—Pet. Sac.

3. There is a work of *Humiliation* and *Compunction*; whereby the spirit is made to mourn and lament in the sense of sin, and withal to tremble in

in apprehension of the danger of it. This is that pricking to the heart which is the usual forerunner of conversion. *Acts* 2. 37. *Now when they heard this, they were pricked to the heart, and they said unto* Peter *and the rest of the Apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?* Now their consciences are wounded, and they mourn in reflection upon their evil ways: They are as an heavy load and burden upon their spirits. What shall we do? *q. d.* We are utterly ruined and undone, except the grace of God step in for our recovery. Can you shew us any way to escape? we are ready to close with any directions prescribed. When God doth bless mens souls in turning them from their iniquities, he doth first cause them to grieve, and bein bitterness for those iniquities, and stirreth up in them a dread and fear of his judgments. * For mark it *Sirs*, although it be love unto God, and sense of the love of God, which have a mighty influence to cause a converted person to cleave unto the Lord; yet it is a dread and fear of wrath and judgment, which bringeth a sinner, in the first conversion, unto God. Thus you know the Jaylor came in *trembling*, *Acts* 16. 29, 30. And when Christ doth shoot out his sharp arrows into mens hearts, then the people fall down under him, *Psal.* 45. 5. It may well be understood of these *arrows of compunction and terror*, whereby the perversness of mens hearts is overcome and subdued: of enemies they are made friends, and brought in-

* *Quo non expugnat ratio, eos manufacit timor.*

* *Non dicentur spiritu de voluntate administrationis christi.* Malv. in Psal. 45.

Cordisque vulnificis figens iniuria sagittis,
Sponte *sibi cogis validis pro-*

to

cumbere genibus. Buchan. The Hebrew שחה rendred *shall fall down*, may well be be meant of an act of adoration. So it is used in *Deut.* 9. 25. & *in Chald.* Dan. 2. 46. Dan. 3. 7.

unto sin, and the reigning power of sin is removed; and a standing averness, and antipathy put into the spirit against it. When this is done, then the divorce is compleated; and the sinner is set at liberty from his corruptions, that he may be joyned unto Christ. For it is not all the arguments and persuasions in the world that can effectually prevail upon a man to cast off his iniquities, and bring him from under the power of sin, until the Spirit of God doth set home those arguments, and doth deaden sin in the heart *. Restraints of providence may keep a man from the outward acts of sin but still the heart is glewed to it. As *Balaam* durst not comply with *Balaack* actually to curse the *Israelites*, but fain he would have done it; *his heart followed the wages of unrighteousness*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. But now the spirit of *Repentance* cometh down the dominion of sin, and breaketh * the bonds of the Covenant, whereby the sinner was held fast in subjection to it: and then he doth say, *What have I to do any more with my idols?*

* *Alii partes formales regenerationis duas constituunt, mortificationem veteris & vivificationem novi hominis.—Et hac illam necessario præsupponit; a quo non re sed ratione tantum distincta est.* Wend. Syst. majus.

* I distinguish between the *grace of Repentance* in the first workings of it upon the heart, and the *exercise of Repentance* in the further mortifying and subduing of sin.

to a ready subjection unto his government. That's the third work.

4. The grace of *Repentance* is poured out upon the soul; whereby the heart is crucified

There-

Therefore believers are said to *be dead to sin*, Rom. 6. 1, 2. and, to have their *old man crucified with Christ, that they may no longer serve sin*, Rom. 6. 6. Thus they are set free from sin, that they may be united to Christ, and become the servants of God through Christ, Rom. 6. 22. This may serve, for opening the fourth Proposition.

5. *Propos.* 5. To deaden a person unto the Law, and to take him off from seeking justification by the Law, that he may be united or married to the Lord Jesus. God doth especially make use of two means. 1. *The Law it self.* 2. *The body of Christ*; that is, the sufferings which he underwent in his body. For this you have the Scripture express, *Gal.* 2. 19. *For I through the Law, am dead to the Law*; *q. d.* by studying the Law it self, I see it can never avail to give me acceptation with the most high. Whatever expectations I have formerly had that way, I now utterly renounce them; and the Law it self hath sufficiently instructed me in this Lesson. 2. For the sufferings of Christ, that place is obvious, *Rom.* 7. 4. *Wherefore my brethren, ye are also become dead to the Law,* * *by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead*; *q. d.* This instruction God hath given us from *Golgotha*, that by the works of the Law no flesh can be justified: indeed our hearts have been hankering after that way of life, and acceptance; nay

* Mori legi est illi renuntiare, & ab ejus imperio manumitti; ita ut nihil habeamus in eâ fiduciâ—Ne offenderet Judaeos verbi asperitate, si dixisset legem esse mortuam, deflexione usus est dicens nos legi esse mortuos. Non ergo bene vivendi regula quam lex praescribit abrogata est, sed qualitas illa quae libertati per Christum parta opponitur, scilicet dum summam perfectionem requirit, & quia non praestamus constringit nos sub aeternae mortis reatu. Calv.

we have ben closely linked thereunto, but the body of Christ hath made a separation between them. *The body of Christ, i. e.* the passion of Christ in his body. The doctrine of Christ's death and crucifixion, if rightly improved, will shew a man the Law's utter insufficiency to give a righteousness, wherein we may appear before the God of heaven. I know many understand it of the *Law of sin*, to which the death of Christ doth deaden us: but the Apostle speaketh evidently in the former verses of the *cap.* of the Law of God. See *v.* 1. *I speak to them that know the Law, that the Law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.* And so in the subsequent verses, *v.* 5. *The motions of sin that were by the Law*; that corruption which took occasion from the commandment to carry us into sin with the greater violence. Parallel to *v.* 8. And *v.* 6. *Is the Law sin? God forbid*; that is, Can we justly charge the Law of God, with our transgressions? far be it from you to imagin such a thing: only our hearts pervert it, and suck poison from that which in it self is excellent. And why may we not understand it in the same acception, in *v.* 4? I will open this Proposition, by shewing you the influence of each of these means or instruments apart, to take off a mans heart from seeking justification by the Law.

1. The first special means is *the Law it self*. That, if we hearken diligently to the voice of it, will loudly proclaim its own insufficiency to save us. If the question be put, where is righteousness to be had? As the light of nature will say, it is not in me; so the Law will answer, it is not in me. And therefore saith the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. 21. *Tell me ye that desire to be under the Law, do not you hear the Law?* for you

you did but hearken to it, it would speak enough in this case, of it self; there would need no further testimony to be produced. *Do but carefully and strictly examine it, and you will quickly find even from it self, that there is no standing before the Lord in the righteousness which is of the Law. For mark it *Sirs*, the reason why sinners seek justification by the Law, is their ignorance of, and unversedness in the Law. A little serious study of it would soon dispel those mists of ignorance. There is a threefold ignorance of the Law, which is the occasion of mens resting upon it for acceptance, and seeking justification thereby.

*Lex vere perspicua nos sibi veri cogit. Id.

1. Ignorance of the terms of the Law, upon which life is promised therein, and eternal happiness made over thereby: unacquaintedness with the conditions that are required, to put us under the verge and compass of justification by it. Men think to come up to the terms of the Law, because they do not mind and consider wherein those terms do consist, upon which it promiseth justification: nor of what extent and latitude they are. A little search into the Law would rectifie this error. If a man will answer the demands of the Law he must be able to produce a *personal*, *perfect*, and *everlasting* obedience. Mark it, I say. 1. It must be personal obedience that is produced: the Law doth not admit of a *surety*, to supply our defects, and to do that for us which we cannot do of our selves. 2. There must be perfect, exact, and spotless obedience; not only sincere and upright, but in every particular the command must be filled up. If there be a failure in the least action, or in the minutest circumstance of

of an action, the Law still not acquit us. 3. It must be perpetual and everlasting obedience; to the very end and period of our course. This is an argument of its inability to justifie, drawn from the Law it self, *Gal.* 3. 10. *As many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse.* How prove you that? why it will undeniably appear, if you mark the terms of the Law. *For it is written: Cursed is every is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of Law, to do them.* *

* Vis argumenti. *Maledictus est qui non servat totam legem: at nemo id facit, nec potest. Ergo*---Marian. in loc.

2. The hankering of a mans heart after justification by the Law, doth proceed from ignorance of the spiritualness of it. If it were studied in this property, it would sufficiently manifest its own inability to save us: for the Law requireth holiness in our persons, as well as rectitude in our lives; it is the rule of mans nature, *what he should be*, as well as the rule of his practise, *what he should do.* The Law condemneth us for the native pravity and pollution of our hearts and spirits within us, and not only for the actual miscarriages in our demeanour: so that, which of the posterity of fallen man can stand before it? The Law injoyneth an absolute rectitude and purity in the thoughts, and affections, and first motions of the soul; as well as integrity in the outward carriage: so that, it is not a civil conversation which will bring you off from the curse denounced by it. If you could suppose a man that had walked all his life-time blameless, that no man could charge him with guilt upon any account: that no one could say *black was his eye* (as the self-justiciaries boast is) yet the Law will pronounce

nounce him accursed, and send him to hell, for the least vain imagination; for the least rising of a proud thought, or an envious thought, or an unbelieving thought, or the like; for the smallest inordinateness in the affections: nay, for the corruption brought with us into the world, as well as for the grosser pollutions perpetrated and committed in the world. And the reason is because the Law is spiritual: it is exceeding broad, as the Psalmist expresseth it, *Psal. 119. 96. I have seen an end of all perfections, but thy commandment is exceeding broad.* It is as extensive as the workings of the whole soul of a man, in any part or faculty of the same: it is as broad as the person: it reacheth to the nature, it is a discerner of, and giveth prescriptions unto the very thoughts and intents of the heart. Thus our Saviour doth vindicate it from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, whereby they did narrow the commandment, and enervate the force of it. *Mat. 5. 21. Ye have heard it was said to them of old time, thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say unto his brother, Racha, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.* It is as much as if our Saviour had said, Your teachers of old in their interpretations of the Law confined the prohibition to the external act: but I tell you, the Law is spiritual, the least groundless anger is murder in Gods account, and deserveth the wrath of God, as well as actual killing; if there be hatred of his brother in a mans heart, he is a murderer; much more if he express that anger or hatred in any contemptuous and provoking

words. The like you have in the case of adultery, *Mat.* 5. 27, 28. Now if this spiritualness of the Law were but throughly studied, it would take off mens hearts from resting thereupon. For it condemneth us for the first rising, or ebullition of sin within us, as well as for the gross outward acts of impiety. It speaketh a man accursed for the defects and imperfections in his obedience, as well as for the neglect and omission of his obedience. It leaveth him under the wrath of God, for the original corruption of his heart. For as the Apostle speaketh, *Rom.* 7. 7. *I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust* [or concupiscence] *except the Law had said, thou shalt not covet.* And *therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his* [God's] *sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin*: as the argument is pressed, *Rom.* 3. 20.

3. A third ground of a mans trusting in his legal righteousness, is ignorance of the rigour and severity of the Law. It requireth exact conformity to the precepts thereof, but administers no strength or assistance to help us in the observation of those precepts: * It calleth for exact performance of what is required, and leaveth no room for repentance & pardon upon any failing whatsoever; nor doth it promise acceptance upon our repentance. The Law *Sirs*, or Covenant of works doth not know what a pardon meaneth. Indeed upon supposal of sin it injoyneth repentance, but doth not accept repentance in any case. The Law is such a severe task-master, that when it hath appointed our work there is no relaxation to be expected: it will not make any abatement in the least, *Rom.* 10. 5. *For* Moses *describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, that the man which doth*

* *Lex jubet, gratia juvat.*

these

those things shall live by them. Mark it, not he that repenteth for his neglect of what is not done, but *he that doth them*; not he that is humbled for his imperfections and failings, but who so never faileth in the least particular. And if this were well considered, the Law it self would knock us off from dependance on the law; and would thereby prove as a Schoolmaster to drive us unto Christ. You have many carnal people, when conscience galleth them for sin, and their hearts smite them for their abominations, they will mourn and lament a little under the sense of it; they are filled with trouble, and perplexity, and a great deal of legal sorrow upon that account, and here they take up their rest. Surely, think they, God will pardon and accept of us, for we have grieved and repent of what we have done. Why mind it *Sirs*, As this doth proceed from ignorance of the nature of repentance [the repentance of *Judas* carried him thus far: True Evangelical repentance doth doth not only humble a man for sin, but turneth him from it even unto God, and is mingled with faith in the blood of Christ] so it proceedeth from ignorance of the law. If thou art not in Christ, but standest on the old bottom of legal righteousness, there is not one word in that Covenant for admission of repentance that is a priviledge brought to light by the Gospel, a part of the purchase of the death of the Mediator of the Covenant of grace; who can have compassion on the ignorant, and such as are turned out of the way. The Covenant of works knoweth nothing of forgiveness of sin upon our repentance: it speaketh not a syllable of comfort, unless we had kept undefiled in the way without the least aberration, or wandring out of it.

Christ Jesus is the Author of repentance, and of acceptance therein, *Acts* 5. 30, 31. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

This is the first instrument that God maketh use of, to take off mens hearts from seeking justification by the law, that they may be united unto Christ; *viz. the Law it self.* And indeed it is delivered to that end, not that persons might rest upon it, but might see the utter impossibility of being saved by it; that it may shew us the necessity of Christs righteousness, and lead us unto him. It was published as a Covenant of works upon this very design, that it might lock men up under guilt, and bind them over to the wrath of God, and make them to see their miserable and remediless condition in themselves, that so they might be necessitated to run for refuge unto Christ, *Rom.* 3. 19. *Now we know that what things soever the Law saith, it saith to them that are under the Law.* To what end? Why, *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God,* Rom. 10. 4. *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* The end of the law] that is, say some, of all the shadows and ceremonies of the law, they had a reference to Christ, and did typifie and prefigure the Lord Jesus. I would not exclude this sense, but I think it may be meant of the publication of the law as a Covenant; it was to this end, that sinners might see more clearly into the weakness of the law to justifie them, and so might have recourse unto Christ, and be justified by faith. The law it self doth bear testimony of it self, how unable it is,

being

being become weak through the flesh; and therefore Christ is the end of it, to bring in everlasting righteousness, such a glorious righteousness as abideth for ever.

2. The second special means to divorce men from the law, or to deaden them unto the law, that they may be married or united to the Son of God, *in the body of Christ*; the sufferings of Christ in his body, the cursed death which he underwent for the sake of sinners. The death of Christ doth not enervate or exauctorate the law of God, *as it is a commandment for guidance of our ways*, or as it is a rule of life: * so the sufferings of Christ are the great Evangelical argument to quicken us unto the conscientious observance of it; shall we not obey his voice, that died for us? shall we sin against him, who shed his precious blood for our sakes? shall we think any thing too hard to be done at his injunction, who thought it not much to humble himself unto the death, even the cursed death of the Cross, that our souls might live? * Why the love of Christ doth constrain us not to live unto our selves, but to serve him to the uttermost, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. *Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea we establish the law*, Rom. 3. 31. But now, as it is a Covenant of life, and doth promise justification unto the observers of it, so the death of Christ doth deaden us unto the law: it is of notable force and efficacy to take off a man from building

* *Christus est ita finis perfectus, non interficiens.* Aug.

* *Rom.* 6. 10, 11. In that he died, he died unto sin once, &c. Likewise reckon [*λογίζεσθε*, ye reason or argue] yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.

and bottoming upon his own legal performances. For this very *topick* the Apostle arguetb with the *Galatians*, cap. 3. 1. *O foolish* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you?* Mark it, the great matter wherein the *Galatians* fell from the truth of the Gospel, was by adhæring to the law, and seeking righteousness therein: Now saith the Apostle, a man would have thought, the doctrine of Christ's death and crucifixion might have been a strong fence against that error, unless you had been under a kind of fascination and witchcraft upon your spirits. Hath the great fundamental principle of the death of Christ, been so plainly and faithfully preached unto you, and set forth amongst you in such lively colours, as if he had been crucified before your eyes, and are you still so foolish as to rest upon the law? Certainly this is an argument of abundant sottishness and madness, or else you have quite forgotten the doctrine of Christ's death, and neglect to make a due improvement thereof. The death of Christ will be of notable use to deaden a man to the law, by making a threefold discovery.

1. By discovering the sinfulness and damnableness of the evil of sin, or transgression of the law of God: in that it could be expiated at no lesser rate, than by the crucifying of the Son of God. It is not any corruptible thing, as silver and gold, could make satisfaction for sin, *but the precious blood of the Son of God*; and therefore certainly it is an evil of a very heinous nature. Thus, my brethren, a real sight of the greatness of the evil of sin, would sooner convince a man of the insufficiency of all

his

his legal righteousness, to satisfie for the wrong that is done unto God by it. If men think to recompence the Lord, by any obedience of their own, for the sins whereof they are guilty, it is because they have low and slight thoughts of the evil of their sins. Now the death of Christ may serve to rectifie such thoughts, and to set forth the damnableness of the nature of sin. And indeed it was one of the ends which God aimed at in the death of Christ; as to save the sinners, so to damn the sin, *Rom. 8. 3. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh; God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.* He condemned it] *that is*, he made it thereby to appear what a deadly, destructive, and damnable nature it is of; how odious, and abominable a thing it is in his sight.* By what way was this made to appear? Why, because nothing could appease his wrath, but the crucifying of the Lord Jesus. Undoubtedly it must needs be a very accursed thing, for which Christ himself was made a curse.

* He condemned it of that capital crime, that it was the meritorious cause of the death of Christ, who was most innocent. *Engl. Annot.*

2. The death of Christ is of use to deaden a sinner to the law, by making discovery of the inexorableness of the justice of God: of his severity and strictness in requiring the utmost farthing, that is due for satisfaction. He did not spare his own Son, when he had iniquity laid upon him, but he was put to a painful, cursed, ignominious, and reproachful death; so that let not the children of men ever expect to be spared, if they lie under the guilt of the least ungodliness. God the Father did not

not abate his own beloved Son any part of the punishment; surely he will never make abatement unto his adversaries. And this was another end of Christ's death, to set forth the exactness and inexorableness of the justice of God; that he will by no means clear the guilty, *Rom. 3. 25, 26. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare I say at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.*

* *Deus justitiam suam declarat dimittit, quia non aliter remisit peccata hominum, quam pretio justo redemptionis accepto; non ab ipsis hominibus, sed a Christo pro nobis satisfaciente. Justum ergo se Deus exhibuit in justa justificatione, & liberatione seu gratuitum. Justitia fuit relatione ad Christum, gratia vero relatione ad nos.* Tolet. in Rom.

3. Lastly, the death of Christ will serve to take off a man from seeking justification by the law, by making a full discovery, that there is no other way imaginable to make reconciliation for sin, and to deliver sinners from the wrath to come; but the death of Christ only.

For *Sirs*, if there had been any other way could have been found out, undoubtedly God would have spared the dearly beloved of his soul: he would never have striken and bruised his only begotten Son. For as the Apostle argueth, *If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law, Gal. 3. 21. q. d.* Had that way been sufficient, to save men and women from everlasting destruction; God would have taken that way, and prevented the sorrows and sufferings of his Son. He would never have sent him into the world, in such a low and despica-

despicable condition: not have brought him into such strains and agonies, as made him sweat drops of blood: nor would he have poured out upon him the vials of his wrath, for the accomplishment of that which might have been otherwise accomplished. So that to rest for justification upon the law is, in effect, to frustrate and make void the grace of God, in the death of the Mediator: *For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain*, Gal. 2. 21. This much for the fifth Proposition touching the way of a sinners union or conjunction with the Lord Jesus.

6. Propos. 6. The way of the actual conjunction between Christ and his people (when they are thus divorced from sin, and dead unto the Law) may be conceived thus. The Lord Christ, by his Spirit, taketh possession of them, and dwelleth in them; and Believers through faith of the operation of the Spirit, take hold of Christ, and get into him; and so they are knit together and become one. For this conjunction, you must understand, is a mutual conjunction; the Lord Jesus cometh and [illegible] with I in me. taketh up his residence [illegible] And again, He that abideth in them; and they are [illegible] me, and I in him. By which inabled to go forth un- [illegible] expressions it appeareth, that to Christ; and receive [illegible] there are two distinct things, him as he is offered in [illegible] One being in Christ, and the Gospel, whereby [illegible] Christ's being in us. August. in Joh. 17. Serm. 120. they are in him; and [illegible] thus this Union is established. These are matters distinct, and accordingly the holy Ghost speaketh distinctly of them, *Joh.* 14. 20. *At that day, ye shall know, that I am in my father, and you in me, and I in you.* See also *Joh.* 6. 56. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh*

drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. So that there are two great bonds or ligaments of this conjunction, and of the union which followeth thereupon. 1. The bond, on Christ's part, is *the Spirit*, whereby the people of God are apprehended of him, and he taketh up his abode in them. For he dwelleth in them by his Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 9, 10. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, &c.* Observe, that what is called *the Spirit dwelling in us* in one verse, is stiled *Christ in us* in the other: because Christ seizeth on us by his Spirit, and abideth in us through the Spirit. 2. The bond of this Union, on the Believers part, is *Faith*, whereby they do apprehend the Lord Jesus Christ, and take him home, as it were, unto themselves. Being apprehended by him, they take hold of him; and so they are knit together, *Eph.* 3. 16, 17. *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.* First Christ cometh by the holy Ghost and entereth into them, and then they are inabled by faith to receive him unto themselves, and to apply themselves unto him: and so they are conjoyned, and made one together.

From this mutual conjunction, doth arise or spring a twofold Union, or Oneness, between Christ and Believers.

There

There is a 1. Natural. 2. Legal.	Union, the bond whereof is	The Spirit, dwelling in them. Faith of the operation of the Spirit.

I will treat of each of them severally, with as much clearness and succinctness as I can.

CHAP. VI.

A natural, and a legal Union with Christ. Wherein they severally consist. A moral Union proceeding from the former. The last Proposition explained.

1. THere is a natural Union, or Oneness betwixt Believers and the Lord Jesus; arising from the possession which he taketh of them, and his residence in them: whereupon they are partakers of the same heavenly and spiritual nature with him; having Christ formed in them, and dwelling with them. Therefore I call it, for distinctions sake, *a natural Union*, because herein they agree in the same divine, and spiritual nature: else for the manner of its effecting, it is supernatural. This you have mentioned abundantly in the Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates*; that is, If you are Christians in good earnest, such as are found in the faith: unless you are persons unapproved,

* *si quid habent Christi, & sincera pietatis.* Calv.
Nisi forte reprobi estis, i. e. improbi. Marian.

ed*, such as upon trial are found to deal falsely, and unfaithfully in the Covenant of God: except you are rotten at the heart, gilded metal, that will not abide the test and touchstone, you must have Christ within you. It is not enough that Christ be preached unto you, but he must be revealed in you. As the Apostle speaketh of his conversion and mission to preach the Gospel, *Gal. 1. 16. When it pleased God who separated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me.* Not only called me to be an Apostle, and made known Christ unto me; but also called me to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ, revealing him in me. The bond of this Union is the Spirit of Christ, which is shed abroad in to the hearts of God's peculiar people; and whereby the Lord Jesus taketh up his habitation in them. For it is the Spirit that treateth with them in Christ's name, and takes possession of them to his use and service. For *hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us, 1 Joh. 3. 24.* This is the first sort of Union betwixt Christ and Believers, which we call a natural union: and it is wrought by the Spirit of Christ that dwelleth in them. Concerning which, I will enlarge a little, for the better clearing it to your understandings, under five Heads.

1. This dwelling of Christ in the souls of his people by his Spirit, whereupon doth arise a natural union with him, is the same thing, we speak of with the positive part of the grace of regeneration whereby the principles of holiness and new obedience are introduced into them; and the image of God is restored upon their natures. For it is hereby that the holy Ghost maketh his entrance into them,

them, and fixeth his settlement with him. You know that regeneration or sanctification (take it for the first saving change, or distinguishing work, upon the soul) consisteth of two parts. 1. There is a privative part, or the mortification and subduing the principles and habits of sin. 2. There is a positive part, or the introduction of new principles of grace, and holiness. There is, 1. A blotting out the image of the devil. 2. Stamping upon a man's heart the divine nature again. You read of them distinctly, *A taking away the heart of a stone, and giving an heart of flesh*, Ezek. 11. 19. There is a removing of the old man, and a bringing in of the new man, which is created after God. Now Christ's being in his people by his Spirit, is the same thing, for *substance*, with this positive part of regeneration. By the mortification of sin, Satan is outed of his possession of the soul: and by the implantation of spiritual grace Christ enters, and taketh possession of the soul, by the renewing of the holy Ghost. Thus you have it explained (for one expression there seemeth to be exegetical of the other) Ezek. 36. 26, 27. *A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you.* Mark it, by the renovation of the heart God's Spirit is said to be within us. And by the washing of regeneration the holy Ghost is said to be shed upon us abundantly, Tit. 3. 5, 6. In the new birth Christ is formed in the soul, by the working of the Spirit.

2. Where Christ doth come, by the operations of his Spirit, to dwell in the hearts of his people, he doth at the same time make his entrance in their whole

whole persons; and take seizin and possession of all their powers and faculties unto his use and service. The plian meaning is this; that the work of sanctification is a *strangle-work*, wrought upon the whole man: there is grace infused into every part and faculty. As in the work of mortification, all the habits of corruption are subdued; so in the work of renovation or vivification, all the seeds of holiness are introduced: the whole man is purified as Christ is pure. The common gifts of the Spirit are bestowed many times singly, and apart one from the other: but special sanctifying graces are planted together. This I lay down, that you may not deceive your selves in this matter, by thinking Christ is in you, when you are strangers unto him. There is great proness in us to mistake upon this account; and to flatter our selves in this case: for some common workings upon the heart, to conclude that saving grace is planted in the heart. And therefore mind what I say, to prevent this self-cozenage; that where a person is cleansed savingly, and effectually, there is an universal purification of the whole man; and all the graces, in the seed of them, are infused together. *As all old things passaway, so every thing is made new*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. The understanding is renewed with saving knowledge of the mind of God; and the will is brought into a blessed subjection to the will of God; the conscience is furnished anew with tenderness and faithfulness: the affections are renewed, by being turned into their right channel, and pointed upon their right objects: love and delight upon God, and hatred and sorrow towards sin; and what is displeasing unto the Lord: the heart is principled anew, with sincerity and singleness; and truth put

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into the inward parts: the memory is made a treasury and store-house of good things; and the body is fitted to be subservient unto the soul, in wayes of holiness. Thus I might run over the several branches of this work. There is vigour and activity put into the soul, to do the will of God *commanding*; and patience to suffer, and be contented under the will of God *disposing*: there is the grace of moderation, to guide in *prosperity*; and the grace of faith, to support under *afflictions* and troubles: and the man is prepared and fitted unto every good word and work, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. *And the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly; and I pray God, your whole soul, and spirit, and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Mark it *Sirs*, the work of sanctification is a very extensive and diffusive work; it leaveneth the whole man, both the inferior and superior faculties of the soul; the animal and the rational powers; and the body likewise. So that it is not some slight touch upon the conscience for sin, or a little touch upon the affections, or inclinations towards the Kingdom of God, that will evidence you to be sanctified; for sanctification ingageth the whole man in an holy compliance with the wayes of holiness, and the interest of Jesus. As a partial repentance, in the exercise of it, which striketh at some sins only, and leaveth a man in the allowance of others, is but a feigned repentance: so partial workings upon the heart, are but common workings; they will not amount to saving grace, *Jer.* 3. 10. When Christ entereth by his Spirit into any of the children of men, he doth take possession of them wholly, and set up his residence in every part and faculty.

3. In this work of the entrance of the Spirit into

to a man's soul, whereupon Christ is said to be in him, and to dwell with him, and possession is taken for his use and service; the soul of that man is altogether passive. My meaning is this, It is not in the power of any person upon the earth to place grace in his own soul, or to confer the habits of holiness upon himself; nor doth he contribute any active assistance in the performance of it; but is wholly wrought upon by the mighty power of God, and the effectual operation of the holy Ghost. We are apt to imagine, that it is in our own power to make a saving change within our selves; that we can convert and turn to God at any time, and repent when we please. As *Luther* said (in point of merit) there is a *Pope* in every mans belly: so may I say in this case, there is a king of *Pelagianism* in every mans heart: and hence it is they take encouragement to procrastinate, and delay, in the matter of salvation, they think they can repent when they will; if it be but upon their death-bed: But *Sure* it must be a day of power that makes you willing: Alas, if God should give you up unto your selves, you would perish for ever in your unregeneracy. The planting grace in the heart is a rising the course of corrupted nature; it is a quickening the dead: it is a creating and infusing of new principles into a man, of which there is no thing in us by nature, but a contrariety and repugnancy thereunto. *Eph. 2. 5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.* And v. 10. For

* *Opus hoc conversionis, sive doctrinæ ejus, non potest: nisi à quo fit, antecedat quo fit. Deinde quia subitis, liberum arbitrium agunt cogunt.* Bernardus. *Observetur, in prima actu justitiæ, quo procedit à gratia Præveniente, voluntatem esse motam, non moventem.* Aquinas prima secundæ q. 111.

we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. So that it is not mans free will, but God's free grace and his infinite power, by which it is wholly wrought: and to him alone doth belong the glory of it.

4. Although we are wholly passive in this work of regeneration, or planting grace into our hearts, (whereby Christ entereth into, and taketh possession of us) and we contribute no manner of active assistance therein: yet there is something required at our hands; in order to the attainment of this grace; and that we may be made partakers thereof. This is well to be noted, that it may prevent our abuse of this doctrine, and that we may not turn the grace of God into negligence, and slothfulness. For will sinners be apt to argue thus: if it be God alone by his infinite power who can imprint grace upon our hearts, and this he doth without our concurrent assistance; then we may lie still, and let the Lord perform his own work; If he please to convert and sanctifie us, we shall be converted; and if not, all our indeavours are to no purpose. But *Sirs*, this is to pervert the grace of the covenant; God forbid, there should be such cursed inferences drawn from this excellent doctrine: although it tendeth to advance and magnifie the free grace and power of God, yet it gives no manner of incouragement to the sloth and carelessne's of men. For though we are not active in the planting grace into our sou's, yet there is something expected at our hands, in order to the attainment thereof. Although we cannot convert ourselves, yet we are to wait upon God, that we may be converted by him: and are to attend upon the means which he hath appointed; and wherein he is

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wont, to meet the souls that seek him. Although we cannot cleanse and sanctifie our own spirits, yet we are diligently to search the Scriptures, and to press arguments upon our selves from the Scriptures, and to give constant attendance upon God in his Ordinances, which are the special instruments he is wont to make use of, whereby to convey the spirit of sanctification. * And this is none other, then what God looketh for at our hands, *Ezek.* 36. v. 26. compared with v. 37. *A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.* But then v. 37. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of, by the house of Israel, that I may do it for them.* Though we cannot mortifie and subdue our own corruptions; yet we should reason the case with our selves, and be much in expostulation with our own hearts; why we should be so vile and foolish, as to serve base lusts and corruptions, and to turn our backs upon the Lord? and though we cannot put the principles of holiness into our own souls; yet we must follow after God by prayer and supplication, that he may graciously send forth the holy Ghost to plant them in us. And this seemeth to be one of the great ends of God, in laying his commandments upon us, though we have no strength or ability to the performance of them; that we might turn the commandment into prayer, and be earnest with him to work in us, what he

* *Subordinata non sunt opponenda, sed componenda.*
Audtio hominis irregeniti etsi conversionem non inchoat; Est tamen ordinarium requisitum quod conversionem ordinariam antecedit; tanquam quaedam ad eam nondum existentem praeparatio. Wendel. Syst. majus.

he requireth to be within us, *Jer.* 31. 18. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God,* Psal. 51. 6, 7, 10. *Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me.* It is just so all the world in the case of a private man or woman, as it is in the work of a Minister: It is not within the power of the most excellent Preacher in the earth to convert one soul; but it should be his care to preach such heart-searching truths, and to press upon sinners such awakening considerations, in season, and out of season, as may have a tendency towards conversion: *to instruct in meekness those that oppose themselves,* not as if he could give them repentance, but *if peradventure* in the use of the means *God may give them repentance,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 25, 26. So it is with sinners themselves; they cannot bring spiritual life into their own souls; yet they may wait upon God in the duties which he hath required, and be earnest with the Lord to speak the word that their souls may live in his sight. As we are to serve God with grace, or in the exercise of grace, when it is bestowed; so we are to seek unto him for grace, that it may be conferred. And *pray mind it Christians,* this will be enough to stop the mouths of impenitent sinners, and render their plea, of inability to convert themselves, invalid. Why thou sinful wretch, who thus cavillest against the Lord, hast thou duly and diligently set upon the discharge of that work, which God calleth for in order to conversion? That is a notable acknowledgment, *Dan.* 9. 13. *We made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquity, and understand thy truth.* If Daniel

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had onely confessed that they had not turned from iniquity, might some captious sinner have been apt to say, alas we had no power, we were not able to turn of our selves; yea, but saith that holy man, we have neglected the means which God hath appointed to turn us; so put it home to thy conscience, hast thou not resisted the Spirit whereby God hath many times striven with thee? Hast thou not neglected to study the word, or restrained prayer before the Lord, wherein peradventure he might have been found by thee? Thus I might instance in other particulars, but I proceed?

5. These principles of grace infused into the soul, in the work of Regeneration; or this image of God restored upon the soul by the Spirit, in the day of conversion, may be called *Christ in us*; and the Lord Jesus may be said thereby to dwell with us; and that upon a fourfold account especially.

Because
1. This grace is derived upon the soul, out of the fulness of Christ.
2. Hereby we are made conformable unto Christ.
3. The Holy Ghost implanting it, doth act in Christs name.
4. Hereby we become his servants, and possession is taken of us to his use.

1. It may be called *Christ in us*, because the habits of grace infused into the soul are derived upon us out of Christs fulness. The whole stock of grace was put into the hands of the Mediator, and from thence it is communicated unto Gods chosen people. When the Lord Jesus was anointed with the Spirit without measure, it was put into his hands as into a common Store-house, or Magazine, that

from

from thence the Elect of God might be furnished. It was put into him as into a fountain, that out of that fountain our vessels might be filled. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*, Col. 1. 19. And *out of his fulness we all receive, and that grace for grace*, John 1. 16. And therefore it is called, *The Law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 2. It is in him originally, in us derivatively, being imparted to us from him.

2. Hereby *Christ may be said to dwell in us*, because grace doth render a man conformable to Christ. In the work of Regeneration our natures are fashioned according to his nature. As there is an answerableness between a Copy and the Original from whence it is transcribed; there is line for line, and sentence for sentence, word for word, and letter for letter: so take the humane nature of Jesus Christ, as he was anointed by the Holy Ghost, and the nature of a Person sanctified; and there is a suitableness between them: there is love for love, and joy for joy, and hatred for hatred; they have the minde of Christ, and the meekness of Christ, and the long-suffering, and compassion, and gentleness of Christ, and the like. Therefore they are said to purifie themselves as he is pure, 1 John 3. 3.

3. By the grace of Regeneration, *the Lord Christ is said to take up his abode in us*, because the Holy Ghost in that work doth act in his name: as purchased by Christ, and receiving commission from him, and being sent by vertue of his Prayer and Intercession, John 16. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.* In the transactions of the

everlasting Covenant, our Lord Jesus undertook to sanctifie, and comfort, and to quicken and establish his people; and by the Spirit of truth he doth accomplish that undertaking. By his death the Spirit was purchased, and in his name he is sent.

4. The grace of Regeneration may be stiled *Christ dwelling in us*, from the tendency of it; which is to bring sinners in subjection to the Government of Christ, and to make them ready to obey the Laws of Christ. Hereby we become his Servants, and possession is taken of us to his use and behoof; that we may cleave unto him, and be followers of him, *Col.* 3. 24. *For ye serve the Lord Christ*, Mat. 19. 28. *Ye that have followed me in the Regeneration*, &c. that is, in your regenerate condition, in the exercise of that grace, which was bestowed upon you in your New-birth; for so it may be well understood. The grace of Regeneration plucketh sinners out of the Kingdom of Satan, and seizeth on them for the service of Christ, carryeth us out to him, and maketh us obedient to his Laws and Dominion. This may suffice to be spoken *to the first branch of that Union, which is between Christ and Believers*; or the first sort of Conjunction betwixt them.

2. There is a *legal Conjunction* and oneness thereupon arising from a Believers reception of Christ, closing with him, and getting into him. Such an Union as there is between the principal *Debtor* and the *Surety*, who hath paid the debt for him, and made over that payment unto him. The Law reckoneth them as one: what payment the Surety hath made for the Debtor in his name, and fully made over unto him, the Law accounts it as if the Debtor himself had paid it; and dischargeth him

there-

thereupon, as if it had been his own personal Act and Deed: because of that intimate relation, or oneness, that is betwixt them *in the estimation of the Law.* Such an union there is between Christ and his people; and therefore we call it a *legal union*, because it hath a special reference unto the Law of God, which acquitteth the person thus united to Christ, by vertue of the sufferings and satisfaction of Jesus Christ; as fully and firmly, as if the party himself had suffered and satisfied. And likewise we call it a *legal union*, because of the analogy it beareth unto the proceedings of Law in Courts of Judicature amongst men. The bond of this union is a saving faith, whereby Believers receive Christ, and take hold on him. As by the Spirit of Regeneration Christ doth take hold of their souls; so by a living faith of the operation of the Spirit, they are inabled to take hold of the Lord Jesus: and so they are compacted and knit together. You know faith is set forth by such expressions, a *receiving of Christ*, and *taking hold of him*, John 1. 12. *But to as many as received him, to them he gave power to be the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* Mark it, we receive Jesus Christ, and take him home to our selves, by believing on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As under the Law, when a man *q. d.* ran for refuge and protection to the *Altar*, he was wont *to lay hold upon the horns of the Altar*: so by faith a sinner betaketh himself for shelter and security unto Christ, and layeth hold upon Christ, *Heb.* 6. 18. *That we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us*, * that is, upon Jesus Christ the object of our hope, and confidence; who is set

* We who to flee from deserved wrath, have taken our

course towards *Jesus*; in hope to get the Salvation offered to us in him. *Dickf. in loc.*

before us in the Gospel, as the person in whom we are to trust: and upon whom to rely and place our hope. By faith we lay hold upon him: and by this laying hold on Christ a Believer is joyned unto Christ, and made one with him. By faith we are in him, and put on his righteousness, *Phil.* 3. 9. *That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* It is of God] he provided it for us: and it is made over to us, and becometh ours by faith in the Mediator. This is the *Second Branch* of the mutual conjunction between Christ and a Believer, and the union thereupon: the bond whereof is faith in Christ. Concerning which I will propose onely these four things to your serious perusal, and meditations.

1. *That the Holy Ghost in the writings of the Scriptures, doth distinctly speak of a fourfold faith.*

There is
1. *An Historical Faith.*
2. *A Temporal Faith.*
3. *A Faith of Miracles.*
4. *A saving and justifying faith in Christ,* which is the bond of our union with the Lord Jesus.

As this is an ordinary School-distinction, so it is a Scripture-distinction which hath its warrant from the word, and its foundation in the word of God.

1. There is *an Historical Faith*, whereby we believe the Scriptures, and the matters therein contained to be Divine Truths, and to have proceed-

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ed from God, * such a faith the Apostle supposed to have been in *Agrippa*, in respect to the writings of the Old Testament, *Acts* 26. 27. *King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest*, q. d. I am confident thou art persuaded of the truth of those things. *Agrippa* being a *Jew*, and always conversant in *Judea*, could not be ignorant of the Scriptures; and *Paul* takes it for granted, that he who owned their Original to be of God, and that in them was discovered nothing but the truths of God. *I know that thou believest*, I am well assured thou darest not deny their Divine Authority. This we call an *Historical Faith*, because it assenteth to the truth of the History of the Bible, as it is a Narrative of things done, and containeth Predictions of things to be done: as it comprehends matters of fact mentioned to be performed, Doctrines asserted, Prophesies and Promises to be fulfilled, and the like. And pray *mark it Sirs*, this faith is diversifyed according to the different testimony on which it is bottomed. * If it be built upon Education, or Custom, the Opinions of Learned men, or the Traditions of our Fathers, and of the Church, and the like *humane evidence*; then it cannot amount no higher than to an *humane faith*. And it is to be feared, that the faith of the generality of people called Christians, is of this sort onely. They believe the Christian Religion to be the true Religion, and the Bible to contain the

* This is by some called a *dogmatical* faith.

* *Quia testes, quibus fidem adhibemus, ex lege & ordine communi, sunt homines vel Deus: idcirco sicut testimonium sic etiam fides distinguitur in humanam & divinam, prout nititur testimonio vel humano vel divino.* Ames. de fid. divin. verit.

the word of God. *Why?* Because all their forefathers were of that Religion, and they were bred and brought up in that way; such Ministers have told them so, and they see many wise men are of that minde. They have the same grounds for their belief, as *Mahometans* and other Idolaters have for theirs. And, as one well observeth, these are Christians rather by *chance* than by *choice*. If their lot had fallen amongst Heathens, and worshippers of stocks and stones, for the same reasons they would have been of their Religion; they would have opposed the Gospel upon the very same grounds, that now they embrace it. Divine truths may be believed by a meer humane faith, if the testimony be humane, upon which they are believed. * A divine faith must be built upon a divine testimony: when a man doth believe the word of God, from those divine Marks and Characters which are stamped upon it; from that mighty and supernatural efficacy which it hath, whereby God doth bear witness unto his word. Thus the Apostle observeth touching the *Thessalonians*, that they received divine truths upon divine testimony; they received it *as the word of God*, for it came to them *not in word only, but in power, and in the holy Ghost, and in much assurance*, 1 Thes. 1. 5. *i. e.* It had such a powerful influence upon their hearts and consciences, that thereby they were assured it was of God.

* It being an impossibility that the assent to the matters of faith should rise higher, or stand firmer, than the assent to the testimony, upon which those things are believed.

My assent to the *object* believed, is according to my assent to the *medium* on which I believe it. *Stillingf. Rational account.* p. 112.

2. There is a *Temporary faith*, which goeth a step

step further than the former. When the judgement is not onely convinced of the divine original and authority of the Scriptures: but those convictions work in some measure upon the affections, that they are taken with the goodness and excellency of them. When the heart is carryed out in a kinde of love and liking to the Person revealing, and the Doctrines revealed; and there are some degrees of inclination towards a closure with those Doctrines: onely they are raised in them but for a fit, whilst they are in a *good mood* (as we say) and it endureth but for a time, it cannot abide the trial; when any great difficulties attend their obedience unto the word, then they cast it off: And for this reason it is called *a temporary faith*: Such a faith you meet with in some of the followers of Christ, whom yet he durst not trust; for he knew they were but hypocrites, though now they followed him, yet shortly they would set against him: when the Scene was altered, they would betray him, and of false friends become his professed enemies, *John* 2. 23, 24. *Many believed in his name, when they saw the Miracles which he did: Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men.* Such was the faith of those others mentioned as his Disciples, *John* 6. 66. *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* And therefore it is observable what our Saviour spake to the *Jews* that believed on him, *John* 8. 31. *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my Disciples indeed.* Then are ye my Disciples] *that is*, then it will be evident that you are; then you will give undeniable proof *that your faith is of the right kind, else you may be

Res tam dignum dicitur fieri, cum incipiunt perfieri.

be rotten at the core, for all your believing; for there is a *temporary faith* that endureth but for a while.

3. There is *a faith of Miracles*; as it is usually stiled, because peculiarly designed and appropriated unto the wonderful works which were wrought for confirmation of the Gospel: the healing of the sick, and casting out of devils, and raising of the dead, and production of such like *supernatural effects*. You read of it, both *active and passive*, as some distinguish. 1. *Active*, and that was a faith required in the persons by whom the miracles were wrought: by whose hands *instrumentally*, through the power of God, the wonderful works were performed. This faith consisteth (as some probably gather) in a full persuasion of the mind, grounded upon a special promise, instinct, or revelation for the bringing to pass such mighty things, *Mat.* 17. 20. *If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed* [this faith of miracles in the smallest degree] *you shall say to this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be unpossible unto you.* Again, *Mat.* 21. 21. *If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done.* 2. There is *a passive faith* of this sort; whereby the person is rendred a fit subject, on whom a miracle is to be wrought. The former was required in the *agent*, this in the *patient*, *Acts* 14. 8, 9, 10. *There sate a certain man at* Lystra *impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mothers womb, who never had walked. The same heard* Paul *speak, who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed; said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet, and he*

leaped

leaped & walked. And it is said of Christ, *Mat.* 13. 51. *He did not many mighty works there* [in his own Country] *because of their unbelief.* This *faith of Miracles* may be in the wicked: it is a gift sometimes conferred on the vilest of men. Probably *Judas* himself, as he was sent forth amongst the rest of the Apostles to preach the Gospel, so he wrought miracles equally with the rest: It is plain that our Saviour gave power to them all, *to heal sicknesses, and cast out devils, Mar.* 3. 14, 15. So that this is no sufficient evidence of a mans interest in Christ. *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. *Many will say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.*

4. There is *a saving and justifying faith*, which puts a man into a state of peace and reconciliation with the Lord: which is the great instrument, designed for the application of the righteousness of Christ; upon the account of which we are justified. And therefore it is called *a justifying faith, Rom.* 5. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* And *Rom.* 3. 30. *It is one God, which shall justifie the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith*; that is, by the righteousness of Christ applyed by faith, and made ours through faith: by the *righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe.* As it is more largely expressed, *v.* 20, 21, 22. This is that faith which is the *uniting grace*, or the bond of Union, betwixt Christ and his people: whereby they clasp about him, and take hold of him, and they become one together. By the habit of faith, infused with other

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gracious habits, the Lord Jesus taketh hold on their souls: and by putting forth this habit into act and exercise, they receive and take hold of the Lord Jesus, *Col.* 2. 6. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him*, i. e. as you have believed on him, and imbraced or received him by believing. That is the first thing I would commend unto you, *viz.* this Scripture distinction of the sorts of faith.

2. *This justifying faith hath the Lord Jesus Christ himself, for the special immediate object, with whom it closeth; and upon whom it is exercised.* It is Christ himself who is primarily tendered in the offers of the Gospel, and therefore true faith, *of this sort*, goeth forth unto him. The special consideration under which a Believer goeth forth to Christ, in the actings of faith for justification, it is *as dying and satisfying the justice of God*: (and therefore usually called *faith in his blood*) and the great incouragement whereupon a Believer is emboldened to act his faith, is the tender of the Gospel, and the promises thereof: but it is Christ himself which is the special, immediate object, upon which faith as justifying is acted, and with whom it closeth. The sinner being incouraged *by the promise*, doth embrace Christ *in the promise*. Hence it is commonly stiled *faith in Christ*, and a *believing on the Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 20. 21. *I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, &c. testifying both to the Jews and also the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* Mark it, as repentance hath God for its ultimate object; it is a turning from sin, and returning unto God; *even unto him*: so faith hath Christ for its special object. The great fundamental act of faith, whereupon sinners

ners are justified, is conversant about Christ, Act. 26. 18. *That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified, by faith that is in me*; πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμὲ: by faith that is acted upon me, [*upon Jesus*, for they are his words] It is by faith exerted and acted upon him, that forgiveness of sins is conveyed: Unto that it seemeth to relate, and the other words to come in as a parenthesis; *as if it had been*, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, by faith that is in me; and (also) an inheritance amongst them that are sanctified. It hath sometimes appeared as strange to me, to meet with descriptions of the nature of *justifying faith*, without so much as the mention of Jesus Christ, the object upon whom it is acted. See the process of the workings of the heart of S. *Paul* in believing; and how he taught in the Churches of Christ. First he was deadned as to expectation of life from the Law, the first Covenant: and then he addresseth himself for justification unto Christ, by believing on him, who is the only Mediator of the second Covenant. That Text is very full, and worthy to be wrot on our hearts in letters of gold, and as with the pen of a diamond, *Gal.* 2. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

3. *The ultimate or compleating act of this justifying faith, whereby it becometh such, is a fiducial resting or relying upon Christ, for righteousness and acceptation with the Lord*: and for all the spiritual benefits that follow thereupon. That which I aim at is this; That justifying faith is not absolved and com-

compleated, by a bare assent of the understanding; but it doth evidently include an act of the heart. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, Rom. 10. 10. *If thou believest with all thine heart*, Acts 8. 37. And the special act of the heart is a *reliance upon Christ*: leaving a mans soul in his hands, upon the articles of the Covenant of grace: leaning upon his merits for acceptance with God: receiving him as he is offered to sinners in the Gospel; and trusting in him, for acceptance and salvation. Thus we have it explained, *Eph.* 1. 12, 13. *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom also ye trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise*. This is the faith both of *Jew* and *Gentile*: *We first believed*, unto whom the word of salvation was first spoken; and *afterwards ye also believed* in Christ. What is this believing? *Why*, it is a trusting in Christ. First the soul heareth the word of salvation promised in Christ, and assenteth to the truth of that word, and thereupon is perswaded to make his actual application unto Christ, and trusteth in him for salvation, *Psal.* 2. 12. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way: when his wrath is kindled but a little; blessed are all they that put their trust in him*: *q. d.* There is no way of avoiding destruction from Christ, but by believing in him, resting upon him: they are the blessed of the Lord that put their trust in him. * Indeed there are many acts of the soul required unto this faith, and com-

* *Sed multum inter est, utrum quisque credat ipsum esse Christum, & utrum credat in Christum. Nam ipsum esse Christum & dæmones crediderunt: Ille enim credit in Christum qui & sperat in Christum & diligit Christum.* Aug.

prized therein. If a man believe in Christ he must have some *competent knowledge* of the nature of Christ, and his mediatory office, and satisfaction: there must be a *firm and lively assent* to the truth of the Gospel; a *sense of the evil of sin*; and the inability of all other means besides the righteousness of Christ, to recover the sinner out of his lost condition: But now a *fiducial reliance upon Christ* for salvation, is the last compleating act. For when the sinner being driven from all other refuges whatsoever, doth not only hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, but actually renounceth every thing for him, and embraceth him as his Saviour; casting his soul, and all his spiritual concernments into Christ's hands; and resting upon him alone for salvation as he is offered in the Gospel, this is a justifying and saving faith. As a *self-justiciary* relieth upon his own righteousness; so a *true believer* resteth upon Christ's righteousness. This is set forth by coming unto Christ, *Mat.* 11, 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Come unto me, *that is*, believe in me, place your hope and confidence in my righteousness. The Lord Jesus in the Gospel is set forth as a propitiation; he was sent to be the Redeemer of lost sinners: Now when a person being affected with his lost estate, sensible of the wrath of God, and the insupportableness of it, and labouring under the burden of sin, doth come unto Christ as such, and make use of him to that end; *namely* to be *his* Redeemer, and doth rest upon him to make atonement for his soul; this is to believe with a justifying faith, *Joh.* 6. 35. *He that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* It is a *looking unto Christ* alone, for re-

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demption and deliverance upon his account. For the brazen Serpent was an eminent type of the Lord Jesus, *Num.* 21. 8, 9. so the *Israelites* looking up thereunto, did signifie our faith in Jesus, by whom our diseases are healed. When a poor sinner is stung in his conscience with the *fiery Serpent* of the guilt of sin, and being filled with dread in apprehension of the sad consequents of it, doth look up unto Christ, as held forth *upon the pole* of the Gospel to be a Saviour, and doth rest upon him; expecting redemption only through his blood; here are the workings of a justifying faith, *Joh.* 3. 14, 15. *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:* [by dying on the Cross; *or* by the publication and tender of his death and righteousness in the Gospel] *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* This is the third particular which I intended to commend to you, for opening the nature of faith, which is the bond of our union with Jesus Christ.

4. *Wherever, and in what soul soever, there is this* fiducial reliance *upon Christ, and his righteousness, in a saving way; there is also, as a necessary companion thereof, an universal subjection to the will of Christ, and a ready submission to his government.* This I add, in the last place, to prevent (if it be possible) the abuse of this doctrine by carnal hearts; and to stop the mouth of those clamours, which are raised by some against it, and the aspersions which they cast upon this evangelical truth; as if it were not a doctrine according to godliness. Will such be ready to say, This doctrine will imbolden sinners in their presumption, and vain confidence. If to believe savingly on Christ, be to rest on him for sal-

salvation, who will not think that he doth believe? What carnal wretch will not say, that he doth rely upon Christ? But *mind it Sirs*, it is not a *thinking or saying he doth rely upon Christ*, will give a man an interest in him; but when he doth *rest upon him indeed*, as he is propounded for a Saviour in the Gospel. And such a faith will purifie the heart, and cause the person believing to bring forth fruits of holiness, in the conversation. Else it will be an evidence that he doth but pretend thereunto, and doth not rest upon Christ in truth. For although it be not the *work faith* [or faith as it is a spiritual act and work] not the *works of faith*, that justifie a sinner in the sight of God: yet that faith which giveth him a title to the righteousness of the Mediator; by whom alone he can be justified, must be an *operative* and *working faith*; such as purgeth the conscience from dead works, and bringeth the soul into subjection unto Christ's Laws, and Government. To this purpose the words of the Apostle *James* are observable, *Cap.* 2. 14. *What doth it profit my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, and have no works? can faith save him?* It is not said, though he have faith and have not works; for where there is faith in the heart, there will be new obedience in the life: but if *he say* that he hath it, if he be a pretender to it; can such a dead, lifeless, pretended faith save him? Christ is held forth in the Gospel, not only as a Redeemer, but as a Lord and a Lawgiver: and these are inseparably connected and knit together. He that presumeth to divide between what God hath joyned together; that will accept of Jesus as a Saviour, but not as a Soveraign, doth not indeed receive the Christ of God, but an idol framed by his own heart. Whom he doth save, he

 he will

will rule and govern, *Heb.* 5. 9. *He became the Author of eternal salvation, unto all them that obeyed him,* I shall not need to trouble you with *controversal points*, as whether faith, *quà* justifying [under that very notion or consideration] doth receive Christ as a Lord? This is acknowledged on both hands, that the faith which justifieth doth receive Christ in al his offices, as a Prophet to instruct and guide us in the ways of God; as a King, to exercise, rule, and dominion over us; and as a Priest, to reconcile and make intercession for us. If we come to Christ for salvation, we must take his yoke upon us, *Mat.* 11. 28, 29. For a dividing faith is a false hypocritical faith, to whom Christ giveth remission of sins, he giveth repentance also. *He saveth us by the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*: So that if we receive him as a *Saviour*, we must have him as a *Sanctifier*; for he saveth by sanctifying, and conducteth sinners to eternal peace, by guiding their feet in the ways of peace.

Thus I have ended together, the *mystical union* betwixt believers and the Lord Jesus (which I mainly drove at, and intend, when I shall speak of it afterwards as the foundation of our communion with Christ, and receivings from him:) as also the *sixth Proposition* laid down to open the manner of the Conjunction between Christ and his people, and their oneness thereupon. There are two Propositions more yet behinde, which I come now to insist upon, that I may finish my answer to the third General Head.

7. *Propos.* 7. From this *mystical union* of a Believer with Christ, or being ingraffed into Christ, there doth flow another sort of union between them,

them, whereof love is the bond: which may be well improved as an evidence of the former, and it is usually called *a moral union*. Such an oneness as there is between the dearest friends, whose hearts are linked together in the bond of amity, and mutual affection. We say sometimes of intimate friends, they are so nearly conjoyned as if they were but one; as if the same soul did animate both in their bodies. * *Deut.* 13. 6. *Thy friend, which is as thine own soul.* So are the Lord Jesus and his peculiar people knit together. He hath a very dear and inflamed affection to them. *He loves them that love him*, Prov. 8. 17. *His delights are with the sons of men*, *Prov.* 8. 31. And on the other hand, he is in their hearts, so as to live and die together. It is the greatest pleasure believers have in the world, to be contemplating the excellencies of Christ, and conversing with him: it is that which doth yield them the most solid content and satisfaction; and they are still hungry and thirsting after the further enjoyment of him: as if they could never have enough of fellowship and society with him, *John* 21. 17. Peter *was grieved, because he said to him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* He could hardly bear it, to have his love to Christ called in question. This union is notably set forth in the *Song of Solomon*: You have many passages for it, I will transcribe a few of them. See the workings of their

* *Amor non est desiderium aut appetitus, ut ab omnibus hactenus traditum: Nam cum potimur amatâ re, non manet appetitus. Est igitur affectus, quo cum re amatâ aut animus, aut unionem perpetuamus.* Scalig. Exerc. 301.

Anima est ubi amat, potiùs quam ubi animat.

hearts towards Christ, *Cap. 2. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. As the apple-tree amongst the trees of the wood, so is my beloved amongst the sons: I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banquetting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. I charge you O ye Daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please:* as if the Church had said, O take heed of displeasing the Lord Jesus; there is nothing will cut me so deeply to the heart, as if you despise him, and sin against him. He is the life of my life, and the strength of my soul; it is acquaintance with him that putteth sweetness into all my accommodations, they would be comfortless comforts, were it not for Christ. I am never better then when I am in communion with him. Again, *ca. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now and go about the City, in the streets, and in the broad wayes, I will seek him whom my soul loveth; I sought him but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the City found me, to whom I said, saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth, I held him and would not let him go, till I had brought him into my Mothers house, and into the Chamber of her that conceived me:* as if the soul of a believer should say, how much doth my Spirit long after Christ? My thoughts are not onely upon him by day, but my meditation is concerning him in the night season. And if he doth hide his face, I have no rest in my Spirit: I make use of all means to

recover

recover the light of his countenance; I pray, and seek, and cry, and watch. I converse with this Christian touching the way to Christ, and I go to that Minister, to direct me in following after him. I leave no stone unturned, no means unassayed: And if I get but a glimpse of his favour, I think all my endeavours well bestowed. O how welcome is he to my soul? With what unspeakable rejoycing doth it fill me? So that I can boast of Christ all the day long. How careful am I to preserve my fellowship with him, that no clouds for the future may interpose betwixt me and the beams of that Sun of righteousness? I might dwell upon the passages of this nature in that book: I will but point you to them. See the Churches as earnest pantings after Christ, as the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, *cap.* 8. 1, 2, 3, 4. And her description of him, and holy exultation, upon the account of her interest in such a Lord and Husband, *cap.* 5. 9, 10, 11, 15. Wherein the close of all is observable, *v.* 16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O ye Daughters of Jerusalem, q. d.* He is the object matter of my whole affections; there is none in heaven but Christ, nor any thing upon the earth to be loved and desired in comparison with him. He is most worthy to be beloved: who cannot but admire such a gracious Redeemer? Do not wonder that my heart is so set upon him, for he is altogether lovely. If you knew but Christ as well as I, it would inflame your hearts in desires after him; it would even ravish your Spirits in the contemplation of his beauty. Never is it possible for any to be so blessed, as those who have him for their friend.

So *upon the other hand*, for the affection of Christ to believers; he hath them graven upon the palms of his hands, upon the very Tables of his heart, *Cant.* 2. 14. *O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rocks, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*, *q. d.* Thou that art despised amongst men, but highly regarded in my sight; preserved by my power and righteousness, which is stable as the rock, that can never be removed: I have provided secure fortifications to preserve thee, when thou art hunted and persecuted on every hand: Come now, and let us converse together, for therein I take pleasure. *Mark it*, nothing is so welcome to Jesus Christ, as the voice and countenance of his Saints: If they do but chatter as a Crane or Swallow, * it is as lovely Songs unto him: If they send but a sigh or a groan up to heaven, it is a refreshment to his Spirit: * If they offer but a mite, it is a sweet oblation before him, because of the love which he beareth unto them. Whereas the incense of the wicked is but as dung in his sight, and the best of their sacrifices, but as the cutting off a dogs neck, or the offering of swines bloud; *that is*, odious and abominable, such as his soul hateth. See another place to this purpose, *Cap.* 4. 9. and so forward. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse: Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my Sister, my Spouse! How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointments than all Spices! Thy lips O*

* Isa. 38. 14.

* Jer. 31. 18, 20.

my

my Spouse, drip as the honey-comb; honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. But I must forbear, only remember what was hinted in the proposition, that this intimate love between believers and Christ, may be well improved as an evidence of their ingrafture into Christ. This *moral union* may be produced as a proof of the *mystical union. For he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 *John* 4. 16. And that it may be of use to this end, our love to Christ, whereby we are knit to him morally, must have these four properties.

It must be
1. *A sincere love.*
2. *A serviceable active love.*
3. *A superlative love.*
4. *A love of complacency and satisfaction.*

1. It must be a *sincere* and *single hearted affection*, without dissimulation and hypocrisie, when the heart of a Christian goeth out after Christ himself, and for himself; when our love to him is kindled by the contemplation of his own innate worth and excellencies, and the spiritual blessings which he hath purchased. There may be a kinde of love to Christ *for the loaves sake*, a following after him for some outward advantage. When Religion is countenanced to be amongst the servants of Christ, is a matter of honour and repute in the eyes of men, it may help to advance a mans secular interest; and many come after him moved by such considerations. But now the heart of a believer is fixed upon Christ for himself, though nothing but frowns from men should follow their cleaving unto him, although it were likely to bring disgrace and reproach along with it, and to expose them to for-

sorrows and sufferings upon every side; yet their souls are resolved to have Christ, * with all the incumbrances that attend the possession of him. Hereunto the promise is made, *Eph. 6. 24. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, i. e.* in simplicity and incorrupteness, having a single aim at the enjoyment of himself.

* *Id propter se expeti dicitur, quod, quamvis habeat extra se commoda, sepositis quoq; illis ac remotis placet.* Sen de Benefic.

2. It must be a *serviceable* and *active love*, such as sets a man a doing to advance the glory of Christ, by a chearful obedience to his Commandments: that maketh him study, and contrive how to please the Lord Jesus: Such a love as restraineth from the evil of sin, whereby Christ is grieved and dishonored; Such as constraineth unto holiness, and causeth a man to take delight and pleasure in doing the will of Christ from the heart. The passion of love *Sirs*, is an active passion, that will set the whole man a work to please the party beloved: it will make him indefinite to all intents, and purposes, to all sorts of services, and nothing will seem burdensome upon that account, *Joh. 14. 21. He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them* (saith our Saviour) *he it is that loveth me*, 1 John 5. 3. *For this is the love of God that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.* The grace of love hath a *facilitating vertue*, it maketh difficult things easie; and sweetens the whole course of obedience. When a man hath a dear affection for Christ, he will do any thing, and suffer any thing for his sake; he will not be afraid to own him in the face of the world, though it may

cost

cost him all that is dear to him besides, 1 *John* 4. 17, 18. *Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment*, that is, (as I take the meaning of the Apostle to be) in the day of mans judgment; when we are called before mens tribunal seats, for the profession of Christ; and required to give an account of our faith in Christ; then we that are true believers will do it boldly, we are not ashamed to own him for our Lord and Master. *Why*? Because we love him; and this is the top of our love, to make us stick fast unto him in times of tryal. Or *this is the perfection of our love*, the putting it to its proper use; it was one of the ends for which this grace was planted within us, that it might cause us to abide with Christ, and not to shrink away from him when we are brought before mens judgment seats. * I am the rather confirmed in this interpretation, from the following words, *v.* 18. *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear*, as if he had said, if persons love Christ sincerely, (which is Evangelical perfection) if they love him really, and in good earnest, they will not be terrified with the threatnings of men: but they will acknowledge him for their Master, in the midst of an adulterous and sinful generation; and though they should be dealt with for it even as they dealt with Christ.

* The latter clause of the 17. v. *Because as he is, so are we in this world*, is rendred in the Syriack in the time past. *Because as he was, so are we in this world.* As if the meaning were this. Why should not we be bold to stand to the cause of Christ? If we suffer for him, it is but what he did for our sakes: We are thereby rendred conformable unto him. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and shall we not willingly partake of his sufferings? *Vide Marlorat. in loc.*

Christ. *why?* Because they dearly love him*, and that love keepeth under their carnal fear, and causeth them to go on with courage amidst all oppositions.* *For many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it, Cant. 8. 7.* And therefore when *Peter* had denyed his Master, once and again, for fear of danger, what is the question that our Saviour puts to him, after his Resurrection? See *Joh.* 21. 15, 16, 17. *Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He said to him the third time, Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* as if Christ had said, haste thou not cause to question the integrity of thy love towards me? Should not thy love have kept thee from disowning thy Lord, even in the High-Priests-Hall, though in times of danger? Is there not reason for thee to search into the reality of thy love? where was it at that time, when thy carnal fear did so prevail?

* The *Gnosticks* (whom as some think, the Apostle here confutes) held, that Christians in danger might to save their lives deny Christ outwardly: Provided that they owned him in their hearts. To confute which devillish opinion St. *John* asserts the necessity of confessing Jesus, *v.* 15. answerable to *Matth.* 10. 32, 33. And here he sheweth that denying Christ for fear of death was utterly inconsistent with love to him.

3. That love of Christ, which will be evidential of our ingrafture into him, must be a *superlative love.* When we give the Lord Jesus the top of our affections, and the uppermost seat in our hearts: and place nothing above him, or in competition with him. When persons plead that they love Christ (and it is pity he should live, *will some carnal people say,* that doth not love the Lord Jesus) but they love the world better: they love the Son of God,

God, but they have more love for their lusts, and the pleasures of sin; this is indeed to reject and despise him. For, *Mat.* 10.37. *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* Luk. 14. 26. *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* If he doth not hate them] *that is*, if he have not a lesser affection for them, than for me; which in comparison with a greater love is a kind of hatred: if he be not ready to cast them away, even with detestation; and to trample them under his feet, when they come in competition with Christ; as we are wont to do that which we hate, and abhor; *he cannot be my disciple*, saith our Saviour. For a Believers love to Christ must be a *superlative love*: so as to account all things but loss and dung for Christ's sake, and to part with all things to win Christ. And to this purpose, you must be much in studying the worth of Christ, and be careful to get an insight into his excellency. For as in secular negotiations, men will never part with a great price for a commodity, except they know the worth of that commodity: so in spiritual affairs, you will never be willing to sustain any great loss for Christ, unless you know the excellency of him. *As your apprehensions of Christ's worth are, such will be your readiness to venture and lose for Christ's sake.* Unless the Merchant had been acquainted with the preciousness of the pearl, he would never have sold all that he had to buy it, *Mat.* 13.45,46.

4. It must be a *love of complacency and satisfaction*: when there is an holy acquiescence of the soul in Christ,

Christ, and a sweet contentment that ariseth from the enjoyment of Christ: When it is the joy and rejoycing of a mans heart, to be converſing with him. * Elſe when perſons ſay they love Christ, but perhaps think not a ſerious thought of him, from one end of the day to the other; ſeldom or never have him in their meditations; care little for any ſpiritual intercourſe with him, that is but a *pretended love*. If a man love the Lord Jeſus indeed, he will long after converſe with him; it will be as marrow and fatneſs to his ſoul to be in his ſociety, *Pſal.* 63. 1, 2, 3, 8. *O God thou art my God, early wil I ſeek thee: my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land, where no water is*, &c. And v. 8. *My ſoul followeth hard after thee.* It is love to Chriſt which maketh Believers ſo prize the Ordinances, wherein they are wont to meet with him: *that is* the reaſon, why they take it ſo heavily, to be deprived of thoſe priviledges; and that they can hardly bear the withdrawments of his preſence, but their ſpirits are ready to ſink within them. See what effect it had upon the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. 6. *I opened to my beloved, but he had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone: my ſoul failed when he ſpake*; that is, when he gave forth his parting words: The Spouſe, at firſt, was not ready to open to Chriſt, and to give him entertainment, v. 3. Why then *farewel*, ſaith Jeſus, I will wait no longer; ſeeing you ſo little regard me, I will be gone immediately. O, then the ſoul faileth, this ſtriketh the ſpirit dead, and there is no quietneſs to be had, till Chriſt be found again, and

* *Amor eſt delectatio cordis alicujus ad aliquid, propter deſiderium in appetendo, & gaudium perfruendo: Per deſiderium currens, requieſcens per gaudium.*

and intreated to return. It is love to Christ, that maketh it so pleasant a thing to a Believer, to recount his perfections, and to reckon up the glorious things that he hath done. See what delight the Spouse taketh in the enumeration of them, *Cant.* 5. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. *So much for the seventh Proposition.*

8. *Propos.* 8. *The eighth and last Proposition is this:* The mystical union of Believers with Christ, and all the priviledges and blessings which are the consequents thereof, do originally flow from the merit of the death of the Lord Jesus: which, in pursuance of the eternal Covenant between the Father and himself, he suffered in their stead; and whereby he gave satisfaction to the justice of God, in their behalf. To this end he undertook to be a Mediator, and to die an accursed death in their room; and in the fulness of time he actually performed it, that they in whose stead he stood might be gathered unto him, and by the Spirit and faith might be made one with him. Upon the account of this his standing in their stead, and transacting matters with the Father, for their good and benefit, some speak of an *eternal Union* betwixt them. *Say they*, In the eternal counsel of God for reconciling sinners unto himself, Christ ingaged to suffer as representing their persons, and so they are considered as one. This we may call a *judicial Union* (as some) or a *transcendental Union.* But I will not stand upon an enquiry into the fitness of these expressions. This I take to be clear, from the Scriptures of truth; That the *mystical Union* of Believers with Christ, wrought by the Spirit and faith (which is the matter we are treating of) and until which they are dead in sins and trespasses, and under the

wrath

wrath of God as well as others; is a fruit of Christ's undertaking to die for them, and actual performance of that undertaking. * That which I drive at is this. That the Lord Jesus did not enter himself into an obligation to undergo the cursed death of the Cross, and in due time actually undergo it, only that the elect of God might be saved if they should get into him: but that they might be brought unto Christ, and ingraffed into him, and so made partakers of salvation. You shall find that their gathering unto Christ, and being implanted into him is mentioned as an effect of his undertaking and suffering for them. This is notably set forth in that *Anti-Socinian* Chapter (as I may call it) which hath broken the teeth of such as have been nibling at it, and out of which it is impossible for them, with all their subtle devices, to extricate themselves. I mean, *Isa.* 53. v. 10, 11, 12. *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed; he shall prolong his dayes, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justifie many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbred with the transgressors: and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for transgressors.*

Mark,

* *Hoc transactio inter Deum & Christum fuit prævia quædam applicatio redemptionis & liberationis nostræ ad sponsorem nostrum, & ad nos in ipso: Quæ ad secundariam istam in nobis peragendam, rationem habet efficacis cujusdam exemplaris, ita ut illa sit hujus repræsentatio, & hac illius virtute producatur.* Ames. med.

Mark, but how abundantly this point is confirmed. Therefore shall Christ have a people gathered unto him, and a seed to serve him: because he made his soul an offering for their sins. Upon that very account, many shall be united to him, so as to be justified by him; because he bare their iniquities. Therefore he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death. *How doth Christ divide the spoil with the strong? Why*, when in the day of conversion he knitteth sinners unto himself. As Satan the strong man armed hath his company, that continue finally impenitent in their wickedness: So Christ by his Spirit doth gather a company unto himself. And *whence doth this proceed? Why*, it is the product of the satisfaction which he made for them. Thus it shall be, because he bare the sins of many. These are the trophies of the victory, that Christ got, by dying the death of the cross. They are ingrafted into him, because he suffered for them. Hence the grace of faith, which is the uniting grace, is said to be attained through the righteousness of Christ. As it is acted upon Christ's righteousness, so it was purchased thereby, and is given forth upon the account thereof, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. *To them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

This is the *last Proposition*. For the clearing whereof, and the point asserted, I will take it asunder into five heads of observation.

1. *Observe*. That the eternal transactions of matters between God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to the redemption and deliverance of the elect, are set forth in the Scriptures, under the notion of a Covenant, that passed be-

twixt them, for the accomplishment of that redemption. As there is a Covenant made with the souls of Believers *in Christ*; so there was a Covenant from everlasting made *with Christ*: a kind of compact and agreement between the Father and the Son; for the restauration of fallen sinners. This is acknowledged by most, as to the matter and substance of the thing: and I think we have it plainly enough under that notion, and expression of a Covenant, *Zech.* 6. 12, 13. *Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place: and he shall build the temple of the Lord. Even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory: and shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a Priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.* The counsel of peace] that is, the transactions in order to making peace betwixt an incensed God, and sinful men and women. Between whom shall this counsel be? why, *between them both*, Jehovah the Lord of Hosts, and the man whose name is the Branch; Jesus Christ who is to build the Church, and who is appointed to be the Ruler and Governour of it. So I conceive it may be understood. Or if you will have it rather to relate to the Kingly and Priestly Offices of Christ, yet it will hold nevertheless, that there was a consultation in heaven, for reconciling of the world: which Christ as King and Priest was to bring into execution. As there was a counsel taken touching the creation of man, between the persons in the blessed Trinity; *Let us make man after our image*: so there was a consultation held concerning the restauration of mankind out of their lapsed condition. Upon this account (as some ob-

observe) Christ is called *The Covenant*, Isa. 49. 8, 9. *I will give thee for a Covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages, That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, shew your selves.* Why for a Covenant? Because God's Covenant with Believers is established in Christ; and there was a *Covenant of Redemption* made with Christ; upon the terms whereof he is constituted to be a Redeemer; *To say to the prisoners, Go forth; to bring deliverance to the captives, and to proclaim the year of release*, or Jubilee, *the acceptable year of the Lord*, as it is, *Isa.* 61. 1, 2.

See another Text to this purpose, *Psal.* 89. 28. *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my Covenant shall stand fast with him.* With whom? *Why*, with the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom *David* was an eminent type: for so I apprehend it must be interpreted, as of whom many passages in the Psalm are most clearly verified; and to whom they may very pertinently, and appositely be referred. And some passages there are, which cannot well be referred to any other. See v. 19. *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* Agreeable to that of the Apostle, *He is able to save unto the uttermost*, Heb. 7. 25. *I have exalted one chosen out of the people.* Which is the very title that is given to the Son of God. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect* [or chosen one] *in whom my soul delighteth*, Isa. 42. 1. Again v. 20. *I have found David my servant.* Christ is often called by that name, as being the most dearly beloved of God; * proceeding from the loins of *David*, according to the flesh; and in a special manner

* A דוד *Dilexit*, sic qu. *Amabilis*.

typified by *David*, both as King and Prophet of his Church, *Jer.* 30. 9. *Hos.* 3. 5. *Ezek.* 34. 23. It followeth there, *With my holy oyl have I anointed him.* Answerable to that of Christ, *Luk.* 4 18. *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.* Again *v.* 27. *I will make him my first born, higher than the Kings of the earth.* Compare it with *Heb.* 1. 6. *Col.* 1. 15. And that I may not make too long a stay upon this matter, see *v.* 29. *His seed will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the dayes of heaven.* * Compared with *Dan.* 7. 13, 14. Now saith God, I have made a Covenant *with him*: not only a Covenant of grace with the Saints in *him*, but a Covenant of redemption (as we call it for distinctions sake) *with him*: and it shall be an everlasting Covenant, wch shal not be cancelled or disanulled, *it shall stand fast with him.* That's *the first thing to be observed.*

* *Quis non videt porrò illud quod dicitur in hoc versu* [viz. *v.* 29.] *non posse esse verum, nisi ad spirituale Christi regnum referatur? Corporalis enim successio in stirpe Davidis, jamdudum cum regno defecit.* Simeon. de Muis, in loc.

2. In this Covenant and compact between the Father and Christ, for the redemption of sinners, the Lord Jesus undertook to put himself under the Law, and to bear the curse of the Law: to give up himself unto death, and so to carry on their salvation. In the consultation between them, it was found, that nothing else could satisfie for the wrong done by sin; and therefore there was no other way to deliver the sinners, but by the death of Christ. God the Father promised unto the Son, That if by his death satisfaction were made, then the sinners shuld be delivered, they should be put into Christ's hands to be saved upon those terms:

And

And our Lord Jesus closed with this proposal, he accepted the offer, and undertook to make satisfaction, by dying and suffering. We have both the branches of that everlasting Covenant in the Scriptures. 1. *God's promise of salvation*, made to Christ, in the behalf of his children, *Tit.* 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the world began.* Mark it, All the promises made to Believers, are made in time; but here is a promise of salvation from eternity: And unto whom could that be made, but unto Christ, for such as should believe in him? 2. *Christ's undertaking to satisfie divine justice*, by humbling himself unto the death: in that famous place, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7. quoted out of *Psal.* 40. *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body thou hast prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hadst no pleasure: Then I said, Lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* This was the way, wherein the Father would have salvation wrought out, for lost sinners: and Christ taketh it upon himself to accomplish the will of God in that behalf. *This is the second Observation.*

3. *Observe in the next place*, That our Lord Jesus, in dying and satisfying the justice of God, for the sins of Believers according to what he had undertaken, did not only die and suffer for their good and benefit; but he died *in their Head*, and suffered in their room; *that is*, he underwent that punishment, which by the rigour of the Law they should have undergone; and took upon himself that curse, which in the strictness of justice would have fallen down upon their heads. Therefore it is said, *The*

Lord laid their iniquities upon him, Isa. 53.6. All the sins of God's elect were made to meet together, and laid upon his shoulders to bear, *Rom.* 5.6,8. *In due time Christ died for the ungodly.* And, *whilst we were sinners Christ died for us*; that is, in our stead and room. We deserved to die, and God graciously spared us, and put his own Son to death in our stead, *Gal.* 2. 20. *He loved me, and gave himself for me.*

4. To bring this home to our purpose, *observe*, That the end of Christ's undertaking thus to die, and of his actual dying in the stead and behalf of lost sinners, was that in due time they might be knit and united unto him; and so partake of the salvation which he purchased for them. So that the *mystical Union* of Believers with Christ, is a fruit of the satisfaction and merit of his death for them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Therefore he died for us, that we might be implanted into him; and so made righteous on his account. And therefore *mark it Sirs*, Though the elect of God have no right or title to any saving mercy, till they are one with Christ: yet he hath a right to this Union for them; and to all other blessings, which are the concomitants or consequents thereof. He prayeth for it on their behalf, and upon his account it is given forth unto them, *Joh.* 17. 20, 21. This is *the fourth particular to be observed*, and it leadeth me to the last.

5. This satisfaction and merit of the death of Christ, although it was laid down for the benefit of such as the Father had given him, and he suffered in their stead; yet doth make no change upon them, till they are drawn unto Christ, and by the Spirit

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and faith made one with him. Until this grace be wrought in them, or conferred upon them, they are still *children of the wrath of God as well as others*, Eph. 2. 3. *The wrath of God abideth on them*, Joh. 3. 36. They are amongst the unrighteous, which, remaining in that condition, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. And if we could suppose them to die before conversion, (although indeed it is not to be supposed) they would perish unavoidably, even as others. And the reason is this; Although Christ died in their stead, and laid down a price for purchase of their pardon, and salvation; and God the Father accepted thereof: yet it was agreed between them, in that everlasting Covenant, that an order should be observed in conveying those mercies, and making them actually partakers of the benefit thereof. *Which order is this*, First they must be sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, and brought by faith unto him, and made one with him, and so receive salvation through his blood. *For till they have the Son, they can have no life by the Son.*

Thus I close my answer to the *third general question* propounded, *concerning the manner, how this conjunction is made up*; or the way wherein this Union is wrought.

CHAP. VII.

The properties of a Believers Union with Christ, It is Immediate, Spiritual, Inseparable. The grounds of that inseparableness. That doctrine further confirmed, and vindicated.

4. I Now pass on, to the *fourth matter of enquiry*; Touching the *properties* of this Union of Believers with the Son, *or having the Son.* This will help us to the acquiring a further insight into the nature of this great priviledge: For the nature of things is much known by their properties. The question then is this.

Qu. *What are the most signal and remarkable properties, of a Believers ingrafting into Christ, or oneness with Christ?*

Answ. In answer hereunto, I will only mention three, the two first of which I shall but glance upon, as intending mainly to inlarge upon the third.

A Believers Union with Christ is { 1. *An immediate.* 2. *A Spiritual.* 3. *An inseparable.* } Union.

1. It is *an immediate Union*, wherein every sincere Christian is knit unto Christ himself: and that *primarily*, and *proximately*, without the intervention of any other betwixt them. Herein it differeth from the *natural Union*, which is between the head and the members, whereby it is sometimes illustrated: All the parts of the body are *really* joyned to the head, yet every of them is not *immediately* joyned thereunto. *For instance*, The hands and the feet are first and immediately joyned to other parts of the

the body, and by their interposition unto the head. But now every sound Believer is knit to Christ immediately, and proximately; even the meanest, and weakest, as well as the strong. Christ is not only married and united unto the Church in general, and consequentially to particular Saints; because they are members of the Church: But each Saint in particular is made one with him, and united immediately unto him. The Apostle doth apply the comfort of it unto himself, *Gal.* 1. 20. *Christ liveth in me.* And our Saviour speaketh it not only of his people in general *collectively* considered, but *distributively* and *singularly* of each of them, *John* 6. 56. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* He that doth it, every individual person that feedeth on me, shall be made partaker of this grace.

2. It is a *spiritual*, and therefore *an invisible Union.* Hence it is that unto the carnal it seemeth a Paradox; as all spiritual things are to an unsanctified heart. They are earthly and sensual, and therefore cannot discern things that are purely spiritual. They fear the faces of men, but little stand in aw of the Majesty of God; because he is a Spirit, and not the object of their senses. They are troubled with sicknesses, and want, and worldly losses; but are little affected with the evil of sin, nor do they taste the bitterness of it, because it is a spiritual evil. They can tast the sweetness of riches, and outward comforts, and creature enjoyments; but tell them of the excellency of union with Christ, and the delight which is to be found in fellowship with him, and they will deride it, and think men are besides themselves to talk of such matters. What's the reason of it? These things are spiritual,

tual, and their hearts are carnal. * And as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* And of this sort is the grace of Union with Christ; and all the transactions hereabouts are spiritual transactions. And therefore when Christ preached this doctrine unto the people, that if they would be blessed by him, they must feed upon him, and become one with him, * his carnal Disciples knew not what to make of it. *This is an hard saying, who can hear it? and from that time many of his Disciples went away back, and walked no more with him,* Joh. 6. 60, 66. That's the second property, *It is a spiritual Union.*

* *Ad cterum rei intellectionem requiritur proportio inter potentiam apprehendentem & rem apprehensam.*

Intellectus assequitur scientiam secundum modum sui, non secundum modum objecti: Quia receptum est in recipiente per modum recipientis.

* *Qualis est fames quâ cibum appetimus, qualis cibus quem appetimus, qualis vita ad quam pascimur, talis quoque est manducatio, & cibi in nobis mansio. Atqui fames ista est spiritualis, &c.*

3. And principally, It is an *inseparable*, and *indissoluble Union*; such as shall never be broken asunder. When Christ and a Believer are once knit together, they shall never be parted any more. When the Lord Jesus cometh by his Spirit, and taketh up his abode in a mans soul, he maketh that soul his eternal mansion; and doth not at any time withdraw himself from it: And when the sinner is by a living faith gotten into Christ, he shall in no case be broken off from him. A dead branch may fall off from the tree, but the living branches will abide

there

there for ever. 1 *Joh.* 2. 27, 28. *But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lye: and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now little children abide in him, &c.* As here is an exhortation pressing Believers to abide in Christ; so here is a word of promise, that they shall abide in him: and that as to both the branches of this conjunction. 1. *The anointing which ye have received, abideth in you*; that is, The principle of grace infused into you, which was typified by the unctions or anointings in the ceremonial Law, which was signified by the precious ointment poured upon the head of *Aaron*, that ran down to the skirts of his garments; this principle will prove indefectible. 2. On the other hand, *ye shall abide in him*, Your faith is a grace that shall not fail, nor decay. This is clear from the reason that is given of the apostacy of some, That therefore they are separated from Christ, because they were never spiritually ingrafted into Christ, * 1 *John* 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* Had they been quickned by Christ's Spirit, they would never have departed from him. It's a matter (*q. d.*) without controversie, *no doubt of it.*

* Tritium nec regis vestes, nec arboreas solida radice fundatas procellæ subvertit. Incertis pulsa temporibus jactantur, invalida arbores turbines innascentes evertunt. Cyp.

This is usually called, *The Saints perseverance.* All natural unions must be dissolved; the husband must be separated from the wife, and children from the parents, and one dear friend from another;

ther; but here is a relation that will be everlasting. This is a point of great concernment to the comfort of a child of God; without which he could in no wise be assured of his safe arrival at the kingdom of heaven. And therefore I will a little longer dwell upon this doctrine.

1. By shewing you the *principal foundations*, on which this inseparableness of union with Christ is bottomed.
2. By propounding *a consideration*, further to *strengthen* and confirm the truth of this point.
3. By *vindication of this doctrine of perseverance*, from the two grand exceptions, that are made against it.

1. For the *foundations upon which this perseverance is built*. Whence doth it come to pass, that a Believers union with Christ, is of such duration, and continuance; that when a man is gotten into Christ he shall abide in him, and persevere in that state unto the end? *I answer*, It is built especially on a *sixfold foundation*.

1. Upon the *unchangeableness of the purpose of God concerning believers, and the never-failingness of his love towards them*: whereby he did elect and fore-ordain them to everlasting life, and set them apart for the eternal enjoyment of himself. This purpose of God cannot be frustrated or disappointed. His counsel shall stand, and he will perform all his pleasure: and the love of God towards his chosen is not a transient fleeting; but an everlasting love. And therefore when he hath gathered a people unto Christ, he will never suffer them to be divided from him again: For that love which moved him to shew compassion upon them, and to

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draw them unto his Son, is unalterable as his own nature and essence; * *without any variableness or shadow of turning*, Jer. 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* As for its original, it is *from everlasting*; so it reacheth *unto everlasting*: whom he loveth indeed, he loveth unto the end. This is noted as the very ground of their perseverance, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18, 19. *Who concerning the truth have erred saying, The resurrection is already past, and overthrew the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.* The foundation of God] *that is*, the eternal purpose, and electing love of God, upon which the salvation of the faithful is built, as upon a sure ground-work: This cannot be shaken; that any of them should fall away to perdition, whom God hath chosen to eternal life. And *the Lord knoweth who are his*; *q. d.* It is true, the faith of some may be overthrown, who were never sound in the faith; but not a person who is the Lord's indeed, shall ever miscarry: for their perseverance is built upon a sure foundation, *namely*, upon the electing love of God that will never fail.

* Δοσις δεοῦ σωτ ἀμετάμελοι, Rom. 11. 29. *i. e.* Δοσις ἥτις ἐκπορεύεται ἐκ ἐκλογῆς: ut indicant verba proximè præcedentia, Secundum electionem Clarissimi. *Suar. de Prædest.*

2. The indissolubleness of this union is built, *Upon the nature of the Covenant made with believers; and the truth and faithfulness of God in keeping Covenant with them.* It is such a lasting Covenant as is confirmed with an oath, whereby the Lord hath manifested the unchangeableness of his counsel: And wherein he hath made provision for the discharge and performance of the articles which are on

on their part to be discharged; as well as for conveyance of the mercies, which he is ingaged to convey thereupon. This you have often spoken of as the ground of their establishment, *Isa.* 54. 8, 9, 10. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of* Noah *should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* As if he had said, As sure as the day and night shall not fail, according as I sware unto *Noah* after the flood; so sure my mercy shall not fail towards you, not shall ye at any hand fall short of it; for I have made it over unto you by a covenant, confirmed with an oath.

It is one remarkable difference between the *word of God*, and *his oath*; That sometimes a word of promise is made under certain exceptions and conditions implyed: upon the failure whereof, God may repent of the good which he promised to do, *Jer.* 18. 7, 9, 10. But when the Lord sweareth, he will not repent; *That* is a certain token of the immutability of his counsel, *Psal.* 110. 4. *Heb.* 6. 17. Now, the perseverance of the Saints is a mercy which God hath sworn to give unto them, *Luke* 1. 73, 74, 75. *The oath which he sware to our father* Abraham, *that he would grant us, That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear: in holiness and righteousness before him, all the dayes of our lives.* Not only that we should be

be admitted into his service, but likewise abide therein unto the death. And for the *freeness of the Covenant*, wherein God hath graciously obliged himself, not only to perform the mercy promised; but also to assist believers with his Spirit for performance of the duty required at their hands, so as not to fall short of that mercy: Take that noted place, *Jer.* 32. 39, 40. *And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*

3. The indissolveableness of the union between Believers and the Lord Jesus, is built *upon the charge that is given unto Christ concerning them, and his faithfulness in accomplishing what he hath undertaken for them.* Thus *Sirs*, when God the Father did put all his elect into Christ's hands, and constituted and ordained him to be a Mediator for them, it was with this express charge; *That he should conduct them to glory.* Not only that he should gather them unto himself, and give them spiritual life; but that he should guide them with safety to the kingdom of heaven. And this charge he undertook, *John* 17. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life, to as many as thou hast given him*, Heb. 2. 10. *In bringing many sons to glory.* Now in pursuance of this undertaking Christ doth knit them to himself *inseparably*; that he may be a faithful steward of the grace of God. It is the very reason which our Saviour giveth, why no man shall pluck Believers out of his hands; because he is to give them eternal life, *John* 10. 28. And the

Apostle

Apostle *Peter* put much stress upon it, when he prayeth for the settlement of Believers in the faith, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. *But the God of all grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory, by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.* Here is a bundle of arguments to incourage our dependance upon God, for our abiding in Christ. There is scarcely a word but hath an *emphasis* upon it, to that purpose. 1. *It is God* that strengthens you; he that is able to do it, and is on your side: so that greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. All your adversaries are but *creatures*, who labour to draw you away, but he that establisheth you is the *Creator*; God blessed for ever. *It is God*, whose wayes are perfect, that is not wont to carry on his designs by halfs, and to leave them in the mid-way, unfinished: and that cannot be disappointed in the fulfilling his counsels. 2. It is *the God of grace*; the Author and giver of grace, and who aimeth at the magnifying of the riches of his grace in the salvation of his people; and therefore will certainly accomplish it, and not suffer them to fall back, and perish from the right way. 3. He is the *God of all grace*, of strengthening, and persevering, as well as of the first converting, and sanctifying grace. 4. It is that God *who hath called us*, and therefore will not forsake us utterly, now we are called. To what end do you think did he bring you into fellowship with himself, if he purposed afterwards to reject you, and let you perish for ever? certainly he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Christ. If whilst you were enemies he reconciled you unto himself, and took you into the bond of the Covenant with himself:

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it cannot be imagined, that he will now cast you out of his favour. If when ye were dead in sins and trespasses, he quickned you; much more being quickned, ye shall be saved through his grace. 5. It is he that *called you by Christ Jesus*; who will undoubtedly carry on the work which he hath undertaken. Indeed if God had put your happiness into your own keeping again, you might have lost it, as *Adam* did at the first: But he hath put it into the hands of his own Son, who is a faithful Trustee. And he hath done it to this end, *that the promise might be sure to all the seed.* Wherefore do ye think did God lay such a sure foundation, and build his people upon the rock, but that the wind and stormes might not overturn the building? 6. It is that God who hath called us unto *glory, unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus*: not only to have fellowship with him for a time here, but to sit down with him in his kingdom for ever. And how should that be attained, if he should suffer you to be separated from his Son, and to draw back unto perdition? Undoubtedly you may go to this God, with a full assurance of faith, to make you perfect, to stablish, strengthen, and settle you. That is *the third foundation* on which the inseparableness of this Union is built.

4. It is built upon the *Advocateship and intercession of our Lord Jesus, which he is making for believers at the right hand of the Father.* For as he came into the world to give satisfaction for them, unto the justice of God; so he entred into heaven, by vertue of that satisfaction, to plead for mercy in their behalf: And this is one of the mercies which he pleadeth for; That they may abide in him for

 ever,

ever, and may not at any time be parted from him. God the Father heareth his Son alwayes, and graneth him whatever petition he maketh for his people. And this is one of the great petitions which he presenteth; that whilst his servants are in the world, they may be kept from the evil of the world: that as they are knit to him, so they may never be divided from him, till they arrive with safety where he is, *Joh.* 17. 15, 24. And it is noted as one of the foundations, whereupon the indefectibility of a Christians faith is bottomed; and consequently of their Union with Christ, which is made up thereby, *Luk.* 22. 31, 32. *And the Lord said*, Simon, Simon, *behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*; *q. d.* The great design of the devil is to root out your faith. He knoweth if that grace fail, other graces will fail with it: if your faith be gone, your union with me is dissolved and broken asunder: But for thy comfort, I assure thee of the contrary, Though it be strongly assaulted, yet it shall never be utterly vanquished; though it may be battered, yet it shall not be wholly overcome; though it may be kept under a little, yet it shall in no wise be rooted up. Whence doth this proceed? *Why*, from Christ's intercession, it shall not fail, for *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.*

5. The inseparableness of a believers union with Christ, is built upon *the mighty power by which they are upheld; and whereby they are preserved in Christ*: and that is the infinite, unlimited, and almighty power of God. All the power in heaven is ingaged in their defence. This the Apostle *Peter* urgeth

eth for our incouragement, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.* As the inheritance is reserved in heaven for you, so ye are kept and preserved for it. Yea, but Satan our adversary is a roaring Lion, that seeketh to devour us; and what if he should pluck us out of the hands of our keeper? *Why*, saith the Apostle, Your keeper is God, the Lord of Hosts, who hath ingaged his strength for your preservation: He is able to bruise Satan under your feet. Is not he that delivered you at first out of the paw of that Lion, of strength sufficient to keep you? The work is easier in itself to keep Satan out, when he is dispossessed, than at first to cast him out of his possession; to keep sin under, when it is subdued; than at first to subdue it. *Besides*, God is omnipotent, there is nothing too hard for him; you have his power for your defence, who is greater than all; *and none can pluck you out of his hands*, Joh. 10. 29.

6. Lastly, it is built upon *the durable nature of the new creature*; or the graces of the Spirit, whereby Christ is formed in the souls of believers; and they are fashioned after his likeness. It is a seed which is of a permanent nature, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him: neither can he sin, because he is born of God*, *i.e.* He doth not sin allowedly, and customarily, as the wicked do; he doth not give up himself to serve his lusts; for he hath a seed within him; another principle, which is contrary to sin, and warreth against it, and hath the supremacy in the Spirit. But what if that seed should be lost? would he not then return with the dog to his vomit? yea, but saith the holy Ghost, It shall not be lost; for the principle of grace is a divine principle; not only

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infu'ed and put into the soul, but fast riveted into the soul. Herein it differs from the habits put into the nature of man at first: They were of divine original, but they were loseable; but when grace is restored under the second Covenant, it shall never be lost. It is an indefectible principle, an everlasting seed; If not in it self, yet in respect of the fountain whence it is derived, *namely*, from the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath the fulness of the Spirit, and is still following his people with fresh influences thereof. Grace was poured forth into *Adam, as water into a cistern or vessel*; which being not carefully lookt to, was by the heat of temptation dried away: but it is issued forth into the hearts of Believers, *as a stream that cometh from a living fountain*, and is fed continually thereby: as a spring from the Ocean, whose current is never stopped, and therefore cannot be drawn dry, *Joh.* 7. 38. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spake of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive*, Joh. 4. 14. *Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst*: that is, Not with a thirst of emptiness and indigence; He shall thirst the more with a thirst of desire,* and earnest breathings after further communications thereof: but he shall never thirst as a person deprived of it; he shall have constant, daily, and continued supplies, until his desires be swallowed up in full fruition and satisfaction: For, as it followeth, *The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* This is the *first thing* for the clearing of this property of our union

* *Satietas ista non desiderio, sed tantum siccitati opponitur.*

union with Christ, *to wit*, the inseparableness of it, *By shewing you the firm foundations whereupon it is built.*

2. For the further *confirmation* and strengthning of this point, *consider*, That as for those things which are most likely, in the apprehensions of man, to make a separation and disjunction between Christ and a Believer; the holy Ghost hath expressly intimated concerning them, that they shall in no case be able to do it. And therefore certainly it is an indissoluble union.* For if any thing could disunite them, a man would think it should be one of these six things.

* *Si quod magis videtur posse non potest, tum quod minus videtur posse non potest.*

Either
1. *The remainders of sin.*
2. *The violent assaults of the devil.*
3. *The allurements of the world.*
4. *False teachers, the devils instruments.*
5. *Troubles and persecutions, for the sake of Christ.*
6. *Death, which is the great separating providence.*

1. The first thing that is most likely to disunite a Believer from the Lord Jesus, is the *remainders of sin, and that by way of provocation.* There are many corruptions left in the hearts of the children of God; and thereupon frequent infirmities and failings in the course of their obedience: sometimes soul miscarriages committed in their lives. For although *grace doth ever act like it self*, (sin cannot grow upon that root) yet *a gracious man doth not always act like himself.* Now the question may be, Will not these pollutions provoke the Lord Christ to abandon their society? Will he hold any inter-

course and fellowship with them, that are thus defiled? May not they justly expect, that this should separate between them? *Why mark it Sirs*, sin in the godly shall never come so high, as to make a separation between them and their Redeemer. It may somewhat interrupt their communion, and hinder them from tasting that usual sweetness, that is to be tasted, in fellowship with Christ: but it shall never break asunder their union with him. For the *power and dominion of sin* over them when they lay weltring in their blood, would rather have hindred the making them one at first; than the *presence of sin* shall dissolve that union, when it is made. If Christ sent forth his Spirit to sanctifie them, when they were slaves of the devil, that he might dwell in them; certainly he will not utterly reject them, because of their infirmities, when they are sanctified; and become the children of God. If he had mercy upon them, when they were in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, and knit them unto himself; surely he will not cast them off, now they are members of his body. The Apostle presseth it as a forcible argument, *Rom.* 5. 8, 9, 10. *God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* As if he had said, Undoubtedly our state of enmity against God, would rather have prevented our reconciliation; than the remainders of sin can now prevent our salvation. There is nothing can be imagined to come in now as an obstacle in the way of our salvation; but would

would have much more proved an obstacle to impede our conversion. If we were ingraffed into Christ, through the superabundant love of God, notwithstanding our former walking in a course of sin: without controversie we shall abide in Christ, he will never withdraw from us, because of some unallowed failings. And besides, *remember*, that when Christ married believers unto himself, and gave up himself unto them, he did it in judgment. He did not act rashly, and inconsiderately; but he knew well enough their frame, what creatures they were, to what failings they were subject, and what remainders of corruption would still abide in them, *Hos.* 2. 19. *I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies.* And that promise is observable, *Psal.* 89. 30, 31, 32. *If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take away from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.* Mark it, God doth own them as the children of Christ notwithstanding their manifold infirmities. Though he may correct them, in his fatherly displeasure, for their sins; yet he will never wholly forsake them: The continuance of his love being not bottomed on their absolute perfection in the faith; but upon his own faithfulness.

2. A second thing which is most likely, but shall not be able to prevail to dissolve this union, is, *The violent assaults of the devil, by way of temptation.* He is a potent and cunning adversary, and will be ready to put forth all his strength and subtlety

against the children of God; to make them lose their hold of Christ, and if it were possible to separate betwixt them and the Lord Jesus. And this is the very ground of the despondency of poor afflicted spirits. When they are strongly buffetted by Satan from without, and find their lusts stirring within, they are apt to yield up the cause, and to say in their hearts, *We shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*: we shall never be able to hold out against this powerful assailant. But mind it *Christians*, Although this should much excite you to watchfulness, yet here is no cause of discouragement. Is Satan a potent enemy? yet he is a conquered enemy. That Christ who dwelleth in you, hath broken the power of hell, and brought under the prince of darkness. His temptations should quicken you to run to Christ for succour, and to cleave the faster about him, and in no wise to cast off your confidence. A sincere believer in this case, should recollect himself with *David, Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?* Is not my Saviour stronger than the strong man armed? Can it be imagined that he delivered me out of the snare of the devil, that he might give me up again unto his will? Did he break in with a mighty force upon my soul, and eject the devil out of his habitation, and come and dwell in me; that afterwards he might surrender up his dwelling place to his greatest adversary? *Why*, Satan by being mine enemy, is Christ's enemy thereby; in whom I am, and unto whom I am closely united; and he wil never suffer him to get the victory. Although he may permit him to vex and disquiet me for a time, that my faith may be exercised,* yet he will bruise

* *Deus bonos non negligit cum negligit: nec obliviscitur, sed*

bruise him under my feet shortly, *Rom.* 16.20.

quasi obliviscitur. Idcò videtur deserere, quia non vult deseri.

Mark, how he rebuketh the devil in the case of *Joshua*, Zech. 3. 2. *And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord who hath chosen* Jerusalem *rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucke out of the fire? q. d.* Have I preserved him to this time by a special preservation, that now I might deliver him into thy mercilefs hands? *So*, doth Christ pluck poor souls as firebrands out of the fire of the wrath of God, and gather them into his own kingdom; that afterwards he may give them up to the prince of darkness? *Mat* 16. 18. *Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* The gates of hell] *that is*, all the power and policy, all the might and craft of the devil and his adhærents. The gates of Cities were the places where their arms and ammunition were laid up; and there their Judges and Counsellors were wont to meet, and advise for the good of the place. So that by *the gates of hell* is meant, the strength and crafty machinations and devices of Satan and his instruments: they may trouble and vex the Saints of the most High, but they shall not prevail against them: not against themeanest faithful member of the Church; because they are built upon the rock. For it is not only the Church in general that is built upon that rock, but every particular Saint. *Behold I lay in* Sion *a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded*, 1 Pet. 2. 6.

3. A third particular that is most likely to disunite a Believer and the Lord Jesus, is, *The allurements of the world*, Temptations *objected*, * (as the

* Temptations are, 1. *Injected*, such as the tempter darts imme-

diately into the soul. 2. *Ascendent*, which arise from some stirred humour or inferior faculty. 3. *Objected*, which proceed from external objects, baited and suited to the inclination of the Spirit.

the Schools distinguish) the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life; as the Apostle giveth us *an inventory* of all the worlds goods, and accommodations, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. These were the very engines whereby our first parents were seduced: and commonly they have a great influence on the souls of their posterity. To follow after which some have *made shipwrack of faith, and put a good conscience far away from them.* For the pleasures of sin, they have forsaken Christ: and for earthly profit and advantage have let go the pursuit of heavenly blessings: and to get honour of men, have neglected that honour that cometh of God only. See *Luk.* 8. 14. 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. *John* 12. 42, 43. But these are outside Christians, who thus forsake their station, and run away from their Master:

* *Charitas quæ deseri potest, nunquam vera fuit.* Aug.

* Such as are indeed ingraffed into Christ, will never let him go: For they have renounced these things already for his sake: when they first gave themselves unto the Lord, it was upon these terms, That they should be ready to suffer the loss of all things at his command. They find in the enjoyment of Christ more solid and substantial pleasure, than sin can minister unto its followers; and greater riches than the whole earth can afford: They account it their highest dignity and preferment to be in him, and of the number of his attendants: They see *that* in the Covenant, which doth infinitely out-bid the world, in all that it can promise unto them that serve it. *Besides*, Through the

Cross

Cross of Christ the world is crucified unto Believers, and they are crucified unto it, and redeemed from it: So that it cannot have that power and prevalency over them, as upon others, *Gal.* 1. 4. *Gal.* 6. 14.

4. *False teachers and seducers* may be thought likely to dissolve this union. They have oftentimes cunning artifices to deceive, and are of unwearied diligence to gain *Proselytes*, and to make them the children of hell. They are wont to come as messengers of righteousness, and transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ. They pretend to high attainments, and plead the Spirit, and new light, for introducing their abominations. And may not *these subtile emissaries of the devil* overturn the faith of God's people? May not they so prevail, as to make a separation between Believers and Christ? *Why Sirs*, the holy Ghost hath given sufficient warrant to assure us it shall not be. They may lead captive silly, unsettled persons, who are laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts: They may beguil unstable souls, who though they have been in the School of Christ, were never taught the truth *as it is in Jesus*: Nay, they may possibly *sly blow* the souls of Christs peculiar servants with wretched errors, and taint their faith; but they shall not be able to overturn their faith: For the foundation of God stands sure, as the Apostle asserteth expressly in this respect, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18, 19. And therefore their seductions are mentioned, as to deceiving the elect, with an [*if it were possible*] *Mat.* 24. 24. *For there shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders: insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.* Intimating that *eventually* it is im-

impossible: they are placed out of harms way; they are put through grace without the reach of their gunshot, as to a total seduction from the faith: as having an unction from the holy One, whereby they know all things, 1 *Joh.* 2. 20. Not that this should imbolden the godly to be tampering with errors: If a man will tread upon hot coals, his feet may be burnt and scorched, though withal his life may be preserved. But this should make you the rather heedful, to stick fast unto the truth; that it may be evident you are such as they have no power over to lead aside into the error of the wicked. It is the very particular consideration which the Apostle *John* presseth upon Believers, why they should not hearken unto seducers, when they teach for doctrines mens inventions, and uncouth notions of their own: Because they were sufficiently taught of Christ, and his word was a plentiful directory unto them, without the help of other additions: and because they should abide in Christ; therefore they were not to be followers of false teachers, 1 *Joh.* 2. 26, 27.

5. *Troubles and persecutions for the sake of Christ shall not be able to dissolve this union.* They may seem to be providences very likely to do it: When Christians shall be dragged into prisons, and abridged of their comforts, and reduced into hardships and extremities; when they shall have trial of cruel mockings and reproaches, yea moreover of scourgings, and torturings in the severest manner that the wicked heart of man can invent: and when all these things might be avoided, if they would but part with Christ. Will not such sore persecutions from the world, drive them back again for deliverance into the world, out of which they

they were called? *Do but mark*, how confident the Apostle is of the contrary, *Rom.* 8. 35, 36, 37. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay in all these things we are more than conquerours, through him that loved us.* How more than conquerours? *Why, q.d.* We are so far from being foiled, that we are brought off with advantage: our faith is thereby fourbished, and our patience strengthened, our other graces are quickned, and our experiences increased. When conquerours get a victory over their enemies, it is seldom or never but with some loss to themselves; but we are gainers by our troubles. Our spiritual strength is augmented, and our vigour heightened to a more intense degree, and we come purified as gold out of the fire of tribulation. So that we can glory in it; *For tribulation worketh patience, and patience brings experience, and experience begetteth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.* As you have it in that *climax* or gradation, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5.

In the winter of adversity the leaves drop off, and the withered boughs are pared away; but the living branches abide. And the reason of it is this, Because when Christ bringeth his people into distress and trouble for his Name, he hath promised to stand by them, and to afford them strength sufficient for their support, under those distresse. *Isa.* 42. 2. *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

thee. When Christ reduceth them into such straits, as they never had experience of; he will then minister to them such strength and assistance, as they never had before experience of. As sure as he is a God of faithfulness he will do it; according to that precious word, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* But may some poor disconsolate soul say, I may quickly be called into temptations and troubles, and I find no strength nor ability, O what is like to become of me at such a season? I am afraid I shall sink under the burden. *Why,* mind the promise, he will do it *with the temptation*: It is not said he will give ability before the trial; but when you are called to use it, you shall not fail of it: You shall have it time enough against you have occasion to exercise it. My brethren, it is an excellent word of promise, an establishing word, if we had hearts to believe. And indeed it is according to what the Saints of God have experimentally found. How faint-hearted was Mr. *Sanders* in the dayes of Qu. *Mary*, and very doubtful of himself, till he was actually brought into sufferings? How dead-spirited was Mr. *Glover*, till he was reduced to the pinch? and then he could cry out, *He is come, He is come.* Nay how cowardly and full of fear was *Moses* himself, till he was ingaged in his work? as appeareth from the excuses he made to evade the imployment, *Exod.* 4. 1, 10, 13.

6. *Death it self*, which is the great separating providence, that parts between a man & all his worldly accommodations, that parts between friends and kinsfolks, between brethren & sisters, & the nearest

and

and dearest relations, *shall not separate believers from Jesus Christ*: But still they are entirely in him, even when they are dead. As it was in the death of Christ himself, though it made a separation *between his body and soul*, yet it did not separate *the humane nature from the divine*: So it is in the death of the Saints, Though it rend the spirit from the flesh, yet it can part *neither* from the Son of God. The very bodies of Believers are still united unto Jesus, even when they are dead; and shall be raised up again (*as I will shew you afterwards*) by vertue of that conjunction. Therefore they are said to *sleep in Jesus*, 1 Thess. 4. 14. and, *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord*, *Rev.* 14. 13. It is not said only, They that die *for the Lord*, but *in the Lord*. A man may suffer death, in some cases, for the true Religion, that never was sincere therein: But if a person *die in Jesus*, then he is blessed indeed. Upon the upshot of all, I may well conclude this point with that of the Apostle *Paul*, in answer *as it were*, to this question we are upon, *Rom.* 8. 35. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? q. d.* Is a Believers union with Christ a dissolveable union, or not? Can it be broken asunder? Or, *if you will*, rather understand it by way of assertion, though delivered interrogatively: For nothing is more ordinary than for affirmative interrogations to denote a vehement denial of the matter questioned. *As if he had said*, This union is altogether inseparable; nothing can part betwixt a Believer and Christ. So fast are they glewed and linked together, that they shall never be divided, or broken asunder again. For saith he, *v.* 38, 39. *I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other crea-*

ture,

ture, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. That's *the second thing* I intended, *for the confirmation of this property of a Believers union with Christ*, viz. the inseparableness of it.

3. A little to *vindicate this point* from the grand exceptions thas are made against it, I will lay down only *two rules.*

Rule 1. *This doctrine of the perseverance of a sincere Believer in the faith*, or the inseparableness of his union with Christ, *is so far* in it self, *from being an enemy to practical holiness and new obedience*, that if rightly improved *it will be a mighty incentive and provocative thereunto.* It will have a powerful influence to inlarge a mans heart, to run the steps of God's commandments; and to cause him to take heed unto himself, to continue upright and undefiled in the way of the Lord. This assertion I maintain, to obviate the *main cavil and objection* that is made against this comfortable truth. For there is an aspersion cast upon it, as if it were not a doctrine according to godliness: as if it did minister occasion to slothfulness, and carelessness, and carnal security. They will be ready to say, *who are the opposers of this truth*, if a person be in Christ, so as to be sure he shall in no case be separated from him; then they will be apt to think they may live as they list: that they may take what liberty they please, to indulge the flesh, and satisfie their lusts, and walk in a way of licentiousness; seeing whatever they do, they shall abide in a state of grace, and come safe to heaven at the last, Thus a door, *say they*, would be opened to all manner of wickedness. But *mind it Sirs*, It is a calumny falsely laid to the charge of this doctrine: For in it self, it is a strong argu-

gument and motive unto holiness: It is a consideration that may have a tendency to the mortifying sin, and awakening the Spirit, if rightly pressed on the soul: and thus it will be improved by a gracious heart. * 'Tis true, there is not the most wholsom herb, but a toad or spider may suck poyson from it: there is not the most heavenly doctrine, but a carnal heart will pervert it unto evil; especially such truths as are purely evangelical, that hold forth the free grace of God, *Jude 4. They turn the grace of God into lasciviousness*; that is, not only the *experience which they have of the grace of God*, in the exercise of it, in their preservation, and affording to them means and seasons for working out their salvation: but it seemeth principally to be meant of the *doctrine of the grace of God*. There is no doctrine more influential in its native tendency, to the subduing of sin, and crucifying the flesh, and quickning to a close walking with God: But ungodly men wrest it, and writhe it, to countenance their filthiness. So hath it befallen this particular point of the Saints perseverance; though in its proper causality, it will help to cleanse a man from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and make him vigorously to pursue the designes of holiness. See what use the Apostle *Peter* makes of it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5, 13. He had before told them, that they were *elect according to the foreknowledge of God*, *v.* 2. and that this grace of election had broken forth in their regeneration, from whence they had *a lively hope of enjoying the inheritance* pre-

* *Hac igitur certitudo* [perseverantiæ] *non potest consistere cum deliberata proposito peccandi, nedum talis quid causari. Piis extremitis procreatur & conservatur; eadem etiam invicem protrea, conservat, & auget.* Ames. Coron.

pared

pared for the Saints, v. 3, 4. And then he doth assure them that they were *kept by the power of God in the state of grace*, that they might not fall short of actually possessing what they hoped for, v. 5. &c. And in the close of all, he subjoyneth this exhortation, v. 13. *Wherefore gird up the loyns of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you, at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts, in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*; *q. d.* If God hath graciously taken care of the concernment of your souls, will not you be diligent to advance the glory of his grace? Will not you be ashamed to sin against him, who hath in every respect dealt so bountifully with you? If the Lord has not been unmindful of securing your salvation, will not you mind his honour, and follow his conduct? Should not this mightily prevail upon you, never to cast off his God, but to cleave unto him unto the end? Be diligently, and industriously, about your work; be ready and prepared for all the wayes of holiness, and to continue stedfast, and unmoveable therein. Do not walk as the generality of people walk, nor as your selves have formerly walked: for God hath called you out of the world, and prepared for you a kingdom; and taketh care of your preservation, that you may come to the enjoyment of it. *This is the proper use of this doctrine*; which will plainly appear, if you seriously weigh these four things.

1. That God hath not promised to preserve his people in the state of grace, and union with Jesus Christ, *whether they be holy or no, or howsoever they walk*: But the promise is to keep them *in the exercise of*

grace & *in the way of holiness*, that so they may not be separated from him. If any expressions in some Ministers, it is not the Scripture doctrine of perseverance; but they endeavour to cast a slurre upon it. We do not teach, that God hath ingaged to bring his people safely to heaven, let them live as they list; or, that he will keep them from falling away from Christ, though they cast off the fear of the Lord, and run to all excess of riot: But God hath ingaged to inable them to live the life of the just, and to cause them to fear his Name, and through the Spirit to mortifie the deeds of the body, that so they may never draw back to perdition, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Ye are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation*, it is not said, God will keep them by his almighty power, whether they believe or no: but he will subdue their unbelief, and set their faith on worke, in order to their being secured. *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* Mark, it is not said, They shall never depart from God, though they slight his word, and despise his Majesty, and reject the fear of his Name: But he will maintain in their hearts an holy awe, and dread of him, that so they may never be cast out of his favour.

2. *Consider*, That the contemplation of this mercy, and seriously pondering it in the heart, by Believers, that God hath so knit them unto his Son, that they shall be still growing up into him, and never be separated from him, *will be of notable efficacy to draw forth their love back again to the Lord, and to kindle in their breasts a fervent affection towards him.* Which love so kindled, is a mighty quickner to obedience. Love is a commanding passion, that

will set all the powers of a mans soul on work, to please the party that is beloved. It will level mountains, and make rough wayes smooth, and no difficulties will deter it. What will not a man do for one whom he dearly loveth? You know what is said of *Jacob*, Gen. 29, 20. Although he served seven years hard service for *Rachel*, the drought consumed him by day, and the frost by night, and his sleep departed from his eyes; yet it was as nothing to him, because he loved her. *Why Sirs*, a pure, entire, and affectionate love to God, would cause men willingly to spend themselves in his service: it would make them very cautious and fearful lest they should dishonour him, or sin against him: Now this great privileege of an indissoluble union with Christ, will mightily inflame the heart with affection, and stir up a person to thankfulness. *Will the soul of a Believer be thus arguing with himself*, hath the Lord Christ been pleased not only to give me a transitory glimps of his favour, (which ye was more than ever I deserved) but taken me into everlasting fellowship with him? *O what shall I render to the Lord?* How shall I sufficiently express my readiness to serve him? Wherein may I be instrumental to shew forth his praise? Surely I will cleave to this God as long as I live, and call upon him whilst I have a being: I will never more rebel against him, *Psal.* 31. 23. *O love the Lord all ye his Saints, for the Lord preserveth the faithful.* If it be meant of temporal preservation; of how much greater force will the argument be upon the account of spiritual grace and establishment? How should a Believer say with *David*? *Psal.* 116. 1, 2. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications: Because he hath inclined his ear to me, I*

will

will call upon him as long as I live. Surely, it is ignorance, and unacquaintedness with the workings of the Spirit in a sanctified heart, that makes men think doctrines of free grace are incouragements to sin.

3. The consideration of the inseparableness of a Believers union with Christ, *should cause a Christian to entertain a holy jealousie, and suspition over his own soul; lest at any time he should draw back from the faith:* That by his fixedness in the wayes of God, it may more abundantly appear, that his profession of godliness was a sincere profession. For if persons are unstedfast in the Covenant of God, it will be a shrewd evidence that their hearts were not right with him. If they do not hold on their way in the practise of godliness, it will be manifest that they went no further, than the form of godliness carried them. So that *the doctrine of perseverance is an awakening doctrine:* It should awaken us to be watchful over our selves, and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. For then *we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end,* Heb. 3. 14. That is, then it will evidently appear, that we are partakers of him, and have a share in his death. If we fall away from Christ, it will be an undeniable token, that we were never spiritually ingrafted into him.

4. A due meditating upon the inseparableness of a Believers union with the Lord Jesus, *will incourage the soul of that believer in resisting, and repelling the instigations of the devil;* and standing fast against all sollicitations to sin. Through grace (*thinks a godly man*) I shall get the victory, and therefore I will stir up my strength to the fight. I see it is not in vain

to strive against the wicked one. If God should leave his children in their own hands, to stand or fall according to the exercise of their own powers then indeed their hearts might sink, and their courage might flag: But seeing God hath ingaged for my perseverance in the faith, I will wrestle with all my might, and use the utmost diligence; for it will not be in vain so to do, *Psal.* 27. 14. *Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say on the Lord.* Hath God promised to preserve you, then be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; follow hard after him, and urge him with his promise; and in his way you may expect the accomplishment of it.

This is the *first rule* for vindication of that property.

Rule 2. *The many counsels and warnings which Christ hath given to his people, to look well to themselves, lest they should lose their hold of him, and be separated from him; are no proof at all that they may be separated, or that their union with him may be dissolved.* God's injunctions upon them to keep themselves, and his ingagement to be their keeper; do not interfere one with the other; but may well consist and stand together. And the reason is evident, Because these cautions an Commandments, are the very means which God is pleased to make use of, for their establishment in the faith: whereby he doth fulfil his promise for their safeguard, and together with which he doth convey his Spirit into their hearts, for prevention of their apostacy. This is according to that *Statute Law* of the Lord of hosts, *That his Spirit shall go forth in his word, and with his word, Isa.* 59. 21. Will some say? To what end doth God so often

often warn Believers that they draw not back to destruction, if they are not liable thereunto? True, it doth suppose that they are liable to apostacy in themselves, * and without divine assistance would totally backslide and perish from the right way: But God hath graciously undertaken for their preservation and abidance in Christ; and these cautions are the means for the accomplishment of that undertaking; and wherewith he sends forth the holy Ghost to strengthen them, that they may abide in his Son, Joh. 17. 17.

* *Vere dicitur fidelem posse à fide sua desistere, quatenus scilicet ipse & principia suæ internæ; considerantur solùm: sic enim defectui subjicitur & mutabilis existit. Deus tamen immutabili fuitione suspendit & conservatum in suis fuderatis principiis illud vitalis. Hanc autem promissionem non solet excepi, nisi verbi ministerio, & similibus auxiliis adhibitis.* Ames. Coron.

Thus I have finished my answer to the *fourth head of enquiry*, touching the most *signal properties* of a Believers union with Jesus Christ.

CHAP. VIII.

The indispensable necessity of Union with Christ: Proved by enumeration of the fundamental blessings, that have dependance thereon.

5. THe next question to be handled, is concerning the necessity of this Union.

Qu. *How doth it appear, that it is a matter of such absolute and indispensable necessity; that if we will have life from the Son, we must have the Son?* or must be thus made one with our Lord Jesus? *For he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.*

Answ. For answer hereunto, *I will shew that the necessity of this Union, by recounting the blessings which are conveyed hereby, and that have a necessary dependance hereupon:* which cannot be received by us, except we are in Christ.

1. First then *in the general*, A Believers union with Christ, or being in him, is the foundation of all his communion with him, or communications of grace out of his fulness: in whatsoever doth appertain either to the quickning, and comfort of our hearts here, or making us meet to partake of the inheritance of the Saints hereafter. In our Lord Jesus is stored up plentiful provision of all things, needful to conduct a sinner to glory; but it is dealt forth to them alone who are knit unto Jesus. It is imparted unto them, by vertue of their being in him. Except the branch be, and abide in the vine, it cannot partake of the sap and fatness of the vine: so except you be implanted into Christ, you cannot be

be made partakers of his grace, or of the treasures of mercy and blessings that are hid in him. It is *in Christ we are compleat*, Col. 2. 10. *thus is*, we have all things derived upon us to make us compleatly happy, from the fulness that is in Christ; and by vertue of our oneness with Christ. The Apostle had laid down this assertion, *v. 9. That in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*; i. e. essentially and substantially: Yea, but *might beleevers say*, what is that unto us? Yes, *saith he*, it shall for your comfort and benefit: If you are in him, you shall thereby attain from him whatsoever is requisite to make you perfectly blessed: So that you need nothing else, to sch up any defect therein. *Thus only in the general.*

2. To descend unto *particulars*, I shall enter upon the enumeration of the several covenant-blessings, which flow from our union with the Lord Jesus. And I find there are especially 11. *fundamental mercies, or blessings* which are communicated unto the Saints, by vertue of their being in Christ; and which have a necessary dependance thereupon.

1. *The grace of justification in the sight of God*, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to us.
2. *The grace of adoption*: or our intollment amongst the number of the children of God.
3. *The participation of the supplies of the Spirit*, to guide us in our journey to the kingdom of heaven.
4. *The gracious acceptation of our duties* and performances.
5. *A title to the promises of the Gospel*, which con-

concern this life, or that which is to come.

6. *Union with the Father*, and an intimate acquaintance with him.

7. That *peace and joy in the holy Ghost*, which gives life and sweetness into every condition.

8. *Deliverance from the sting of death*, and consequently from the fear of that king of terrors.

9. *A glorious resurrection* out of the dust of the earth.

10. *Boldness and comfort in our appearance at the bar of judgment.*

11. *The actual possession, and enjoyment of a crown of glory.*

So that, whatsoever grace or mercy is prepared for the Saints, it is dealt out unto them in this way; from their first entrance into the state of grace, to their sitting down upon the throne of glory. *I will mainly enlarge upon the first and third of these, glancing only upon the rest.*

1. The first blessing that I shall mention as depending upon Union with Jesus Christ, is *the justification of a sinner in the sight of God*, upon the account of Christ's righteousness imputed to him: whereby the guilt of sin is removed, and the person of the sinner is accepted as righteous with the God of heaven. Here lieth one argument of the necessity of being thus ingrafted into Christ: Because *without union with him, there can be no justification through his blood*, nor clothing with his righteousness for acceptance with the Lord. Our righteousness for pardon and justification, is in the Lord; and we our selves must be in him, that we may partake of his righteousness: For it will signifie nothing

nothing to us, except we are in him, *Eph.* 1. 6. *He hath made us accepted in the beloved.* And v. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* This is a fundamental, leading mercy, which maketh way for the conferring of other mercies. * For till sin be pardoned, the curse of the Law cannot be removed from the sinner: and this pardon is given forth upon the account of Christ's righteousness imputed to us; in order whereunto we must of necessity be in him. For *in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

* *Doctrina justificationis est articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiæ. Luth.*

I will open to you the force of this argument, by taking it asunder into *six branches*, and speaking distinctly to each of them.

1. *Observe*, That the grace of justification in the sight of God, is made up of two parts. 1. There is forgiveness of the offences committed against the Lord. 2. Acceptation of the person offending, pronouncing him a righteous person, and receiving him into favour again as if he had never offended. This is clear from the Scriptures of truth. 1. There is an act of *absolution and acquital* from the guilt of sin; and freedom from the condemnation deserved by sin: The *desert of sin* is an inseparable accident or concomitant of it, * that can never be removed. It may be said of the sins of a justified person that they deserve everlasting destruction: But justification is the freeing a sinner from *the guilt of his iniquity,*

* *Reatus vel* { 1. *Simplex* 2. *Redundans in personam.*

iniquity, whereby he was actually bound over to condemnation; so that the person justified may say, *Who is he that condemneth?* He may read over the most dreadful passages of the Law, without being terrified; as knowing the curse is removed from over his head: his sins that brought him under the curse are forgiven; and are in point of condemnation as if they had never been. This is to be justified; to have sin thus forgiven, and the penalty remitted. *Rom.* 4. 5, 6, 7, 8. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as* David *also describeth the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works*, saying, *Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.* Mark it, what *David* calleth forgiveness of sin and not imputing of iniquity, S. *Paul* stiles a being justified. This is expressed elsewhere by *not remembring transgressions any more*, *Heb.* 8. 12. And there are *three ways* how they shall not be remembred any more. (1.) God will not remember them, *so as to upbraid his people with their miscarriages*: He will never hit them in the teeth with their sins. When the wicked seek unto him in affliction, and howl for deliverance, God doth upbraid them with their wickedness, *Jer.* 2. 27, 28. *Where are thy Gods which thou hast made thee? Let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of trouble*; *q. d.* Why do ye come to me, seeing you hate me, and cast me off, and set up idols in your hearts? Get you to them for deliverance, for you are none of my servants. But when persons are justified, their sins shall be as if they had not been: God will welcom them into his house, and embrace them in his arms, and never

yet throw it in their dish, how unkind, or unthankful, or stubborn they have been formerly. See it in the return of the *Prodigal*, *Luke* 15. 20, 21, 22. *When he was a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said unto his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring upon his hand, and shoes upon his feet.* One would have thought, he would have fallen foul upon him, and said, *You are well enough served to depart out of my family: you see what it is to think your self wiser than your father: What account can you give me of the patrimony you received? Do you think I will give you entertainment, now you have spent your substance with riotous living, amongst harlots? Go to your sinful companions that have made a prey of you, and see what relief they will afford now in the day of your distress.* But here is not a word of such language; But, *welcome my dear son, he is a pleasant child, my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him*, Jer. 31. 20. (2.) Their sins shall not be remembred *so as to stop the current of God's bounty, or to with-hold good things from them.* When God would have healed *Israel*, their sins came to remembrance, and put a stop to the progress of his mercy, *Hos.* 7. 1, 2. But now by the grace of pardon, this obstacle is removed out of the way, that his compassions may flow down freely upon them, * *Mic.* 7. 19, 20. (3.) He will not remember them so as to condemn them for sin, iniquity

* *ut in peccati reatu est lacrum essans, & damnum emergens: ita condonatio peccati non est pœnam abstinva mali, sed & collativa toni.*

shall

shall not prove their ruine, * Job. 5. 24. This is the first part of justification, *namely*, the pardon of sin. 2. There is the *acceptation of the person as righteous in God's sight*: pronouncing him such, and dealing with him accordingly, restoring him to that favour again which he had lost by his transgressions, *Rom.* 5. *v.* 16. compared with *v.* 19. This is the *first thing* I would note to shew you the force of this argument, *That justification, for the nature of it, is the gracious pardon of the sinners transgressions, and acceptance of his person as righteous in God's sight.*

2. In order to our partaking of this grace, of the forgiveness of sin and acceptation of our persons, *we must be able to produce a perfect righteousness before the Lord, and to present and tender it unto God.* And the reason is evident, from the very nature of God himself: He is infinitely, immutably, & inexorably just, as well as incomprehensibly gracious; And in this justification of a sinner, he doth act *as a God of justice*, as well as of compassion. He doth forgive iniquity in a way of righteousness, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* God doth not pronounce men righteous when they are not; but first he maketh them righteous, and then receiveth them as such, and pronounceth them to be such. * So that if a man will be justified, he must be

* *Pretium sed volentem, ut sit judicio non revertatur.*

* *Non igitur docemur credentes fore justitiâ justificari: quatenus justificationem impii, Deus pronunciat esse abominationem,* Prov. 17. Isa 5. *Sed dicimur interesse esse ut in justificatione intercedat & interveniat justitia: Et quidem non quisquis-quis justitia, sed talis quæ in judicio Dei sufficiens & digna sit; ut justa pronunctietur ad vitam æternam* Chemn. exam. Concil. Trid.

be able to produce such a compleat righteousness, as wherewith he may stand before the justice of God. This is a matter very seriously to be weighed, because multitudes deceive themselves herein: They hope God will forgive them, because he is a God of mercy, and of unspeakable compassions: but they never consider what entertainment the justice of God will give them; nor how they shall stand before his righteousness. *Why, man remember:* The Lord is infinitely just, as well as merciful; and if ever thy sins be pardoned, it must be by an admirable contemperament or mixture of mercy and justice together. I will not enter upon the debate of that question, which some have ventilated, whether God in his absolute soveraignty could not have forgiven sin, meerly as an act of grace, without the sinners producing any satisfaction to justice? Suffice it us to be assured, *That God will not*; and supposing his word and purpose, *he cannot*: for he is a God that cannot lie, that cannot change, or vary in his determinations. It was one of the great ends of the Gospel dispensation, that God might exalt his justice in the justification of a sinner, *Rom.* 3. 26.

3. *The only matter of man's righteousness*, since the fall of *Adam*, wherein he can appear with comfort before the justice of God, and *consequently* whereby alone he can be justified in his sight; *is the obedience and sufferings of Jesus Christ*, the righteousness of the Mediator. There is not any other way imaginable, how the justice of God may be satisfied, and we may have our sins pardoned in a way of justice; but by the righteousness of the Son of God. And therefore this is his name, *Jehovah Tsidkenu. The Lord our righteousness*, *Jer.* 23. 6.

This

This is his name] *that is*, this is the prerogative of the Lord Jesus, a matter that appertains to him alone, to be able to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, *Dan.* 9, 24. All our obedience to the Law, and the good works we can perform, throughout the whole course of our lives, can never be a sufficient righteousness for us. *Alas*, what are they, even all our righteousnesses put together, but as a filthy rag, and as a menstrous cloth? The very imperfections and sinfull mixtures of our most spiritual duties, were enough to condemn us. It is by Christ alone, that they who believe are justified from all things, from which they cannot be justified by the Law of *Moses*, *Act.* 13. 39. I will add two *considerations* further to strengthen this particular, besides what hath been delivered, when we were speaking of the divorce of a sinner from the Law, and to take us off from resting upon a legal righteousness.

1. *The most eminent and choicest servants of God, that ever lived upon earth, have utterly disclaimed and disowned their own personal obedience, in the point of justification.* They durst not, at any hand, put their trust in it; but knew it would be too short, and that they should miscarry for ever, if they relyed thereupon. *Thus my brethren*; If any persons under heaven could be justified by the Law, and pronounced righteous upon legal terms, *that is*, upon the account of their own holiness and good works; it would be such as have been most active for God, and most useful and upright in their generations, and that lived in the neerest conformity unto the Law: But *even they* durst not place their confidence therein, but have utterly renounced it. Take the instance

instance of *Job*, a man who had not his fellow upon earth, as we have assurance of it by the *latters testimonial* of the God of the spirits of all flesh, *Job* 1. 8. Durst he depend on his own righteousness? See how he disclaimeth it, *Job* 9. 20. *If I justifie my self, my own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.* And *cap.* 42. 6. *I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes.* Take the example of *David*, a man after God's own heart, who fulfilled all his wills, *Act.* 13. 22. What saith he in this case? See *Psal.* 130. 3, 4. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, who, O Lord could stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* * Let us descend to *Daniel*, a man greatly beloved, and of singular integrity; insomuch that when the Lord doth reckon up the most noted examples of piety he is singled out as one, *Ezek.* 14. 14. And mark how he renounceth all confidence in the flesh, and resteth only upon Christ, *Dan.* 9. 17, 18. *Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for the Lords sake.* And *v.* 18. *We do not present our supplications before thee, for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies:* For he had before acknowledged, that unto them belonged confusion of face. *It is true*, that believers have sometimes pleaded their holiness, as an evidence of the sincerity and uprightness of their hearts with God, and of their interest in the promises of mercy: But they durst not appear in it before the justice of God. That is a notable passage of *Nehemiah*, *Cap.* 13. 22. *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy*; *q. d.* Through

* *Meum meritum est miseratio Domini.* Bern.

Justitia nostra est indulgentia tua, Domine.

grace I have been serviceable to the Lord, and expect a blessing thereupon: but withal I stand in need of great mercies to cover the defects of those services.

2. *Such persons as have gone about to establish their own righteousness, and attempted to be justified thereby, have everlastingly miscarried in that attempt* and fell short of heaven, and found it to be but a broken reed, that could never bear them up before the justice of God. You read of some persons that *seek to come to heaven, and are not able*, Luk. 13. 24. And these are one sort of those persons. As such who seek it slothfully, and negligently, without striving to enter in at the strait gate; so they that seek it by their own personal righteousness, and expect to be justified thereupon. And therefore observe what the Apostle saith to the *Galatians*, whose hearts hankered after that way of justification, Gal. 3. 4. *Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if yet it be in vain; q. d.* If you go on to lean upon your own righteousness, and rely not upon Christ, all your Religion is in vain. Whatever you have done or suffered will never save you from the wrath to come. This is the *third thing* to be observed, *That it is only the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which a sinner can be justified in the sight of God.*

4. We can receive no benefit by the righteousness of Christ, for justification in the sight of God; nor can we be pardoned and accepted thereupon, *until that righteousness become ours, and be made over unto us.* This is evident at the first view; How can we plead it with God, except we have an interest therein? What advantage can it be to us, unless it be ours? Here is the mistake of many carnal people, they hope to have their sins forgiven upon the

the account of Christ's righteousness, and never enquire if that righteousness be theirs. *Mark it Sirs*, It must be yours, and made over to you, or else it will never stand you in stead. *They shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ, who receive the gift of righteousness by him*, Rom. 5. 17. Except they receive it, it is nothing unto them. It is in it self white raiment, and beautiful and glorious apparel; but it will never cover our nakedness, except it be put on, and we are cloathed therewith, *Rev.* 3. *v.* 18. It must be made over to us, that we may be justified thereby.

5. *Observe in the next place*, That the way wherein, or whereby, this righteousness of Gods providing is conveyed and made over to us, that we may receive the benefit thereof, and be justified thereby; it is *by way of imputation*. That is the usual expression made use of in this business; *and the meaning is this*, God doth reckon the righteousness of Christ unto his people, as if it were their own. He doth count unto them Christ's sufferings and satisfaction, and make them partakers of the vertue thereof, as if themselves had suffered and satisfied. This is the genuine and proper import of the word *imputation*: when that which is personally done by one, is accounted and reckoned unto another, and laid upon his score as if he had done it.* *This it is in this very case*: We sinned and fell short of the glory of God, and became obnoxious to the vindictive justice of God: and the Lord Jesus Christ by his obedience and

* *Imputari dicitur illud alicui, quod in aliquo non inhaeret seu existit realiter, sed tamen ei adscribitur, ac si in ipso realiter inhaereret & existeret: atque adeo quod in ipsum transferitur.* Pet. Ravan.

death, hath given content and satisfaction unto divine justice in our behalf: Now when God doth pardon and accept us hereupon, he doth put it upon our account; he doth reckon it or impute it unto us, as fully in respect of the benefit thereof, as if we our selves had performed it, in our own persons. This is not a notion only invented by men, but it is the way wherein the holy Ghost expresseth it, *Rom. 4. 6. Even as* David *also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness, without works.* And *v. 11. That righteousness might be imputed unto them also.* And therefore let me intreat you to mind this Scripture rule: *That in order to the satisfaction of the justice of God, the sins of God's people were imputed and reckoned unto Christ; and in order to our partaking of the benefit of that satisfaction, or deliverance thereby, Christ's righteousness must be imputed and reckoned unto us.* The first branch of this rule you have, *Isa. 53. 5, 6. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, &c. and the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all.* And for the other branch of the rule, see *Rom. 5. 19. As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* How did *Adam*'s sin become ours? *why* by way of imputation. He transgressed the Covenant, and did eat the forbidden fruit, and it was justly reckoned unto us. It was *personally* the sinful act of our first parents; but it is imputed to many, even to all of us who proceeded out of his loyns. For we were in him, not only *natural*, as he was the root of mankind, but also *legally* as he was the great Representative of mankind. In the covenant of works and the transactions thereof, *Adam* stood in the stead, and acted in the behalf, not only of himself,

selfe, but of all his posterity; and therefore his sin is reckoned unto them. *Even so*, saith the Apostle, After the same manner, the obedience and righteousnes of Christ is made over to many for justification.

6. *Observe further, to compleat this argument, in the last place*, That no persons whatsoever of the children of men can have the righteousnes of Christ imputed to them, *but only such as are in Christ*: Such as are united to him, and made one with him; For Sirs, *Union is the very ground of imputation*. The sin of *Adam* had not been reckoned to us, nor laid to our charge, unless we had been *legally* and *by way of representation* in *Adam* (which is the reason, that the sins of our more immediate parents and ancestors are not reckoned to us, further than we personally comply with them, and follow their example, *Ezek.* 18. 14, 15, 16, 17.) so we cannot have the obedience of Christ made over to us and reputed as ours; but first in order of nature we must be in him. * 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *That we might be made the righteousnes of God in him.* Phil. 3. 9. *That I may be found in him, not having my own righteousnes which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousnes which is of God by faith.* Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* Unless they be in him, they are condemned: For, no union with the Son, and no justification in the sight of God, through his righteousnes.

* *Est autem Christus justitia nostra. Sed quomodo per illam, ut alienam, possumus justificari ad vitam æternam? Respondeo, sicut Paulus inquit*, Gal. 3. *Quicunque in Christum baptizati estis, Christum induistis. Simul ergo ejus etiam justitiâ induti sumus.* Chemn. exam. Conc. Trid.

This is the *first fundamental blessing* which hath dependance upon union with Christ, *viz. The grace of justification.*

2. There is *the grace of adoption*, or *inrolment amongst the number of the children of God*: whereby we are inabled to look up unto him as a Father, and have a right to all the priviledges belonging to the sons and daughters of the most High. As by the grace of conversion we are returned back again to the service of the Lord; so by adoption we are readmitted into the number of the children of God. You know, the Church of Christ is called *God's houshold or family*: Now, the work of conviction, and humiliation, and legal terrors *bring a sinner to the door of the house*: Effectuall calling and sanctification *open the door for entrance into the house*, and fit the sinner to live according to the laws of the family: Justification *clothes him as a member of the houshold*; and Adoption *puts him amongst the children*, Gal. 4. 5. *That we might receive the adoption of sons*; that is, that we might be taken out of Satans family (for by nature we are of our father the devil, *Joh.* 8. 44.) and instated into the number of God's children. This is a very precious mercy. What can a person want who hath such a father to provide for him? If earthly parents take care for their children, will not the God of heaven supply the necessities of his little ones? Shall they be in distress and will not he succour them? *Mat.* 6. 32. With what boldness may they come to the throne of grace, and beg whatever they need, and be assured not to be sent away empty? *Now* this blessed priviledge depends upon our union with Jesus Christ: As it was a mercy purchased by his blood, so it is actually conferred

ferred upon those that are in him. The Lord Jesus is the natural, eternal, only begotten Son of God, who lieth in the bosom of the Father; and when we are married unto Christ, we become the children of God also; by vertue of our conjunction with his Son, and nearness of relation unto his Son, *Eph. 1. 5. Having predestinated us to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself.* And if you enquire when this purpose is executed, and we actually become his children? The same Apostle will resolve it, *when we are in Christ.* Predestination hath designed us unto this priviledge, and union with Christ doth instate us in it, *Gal. 3. 26. For ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*; by that grace which knitteth you unto Jesus. This is a *second Argument* of the necessity of having the Son: For *no union with Christ, no adoption of children by him.* Therefore the Lord is our Father because Christ's Father, and our God because his God, we being one with him.

3. The *third fundamental blessing*, which I shall mention as flowing from oneness with Christ, and having a necessary dependance thereupon, is, *The participation of the supplies of the Spirit of Jesus*, to guide us in our journey to the kingdom of heaven. As a sinner must partake of regenerating grace from the Spirit, to put him in the way of everlasting life; so he stands in need of the continued supplies of that good Spirit, to conduct and keep him in that way. Besides the *first grace* which bringeth us unto Christ, there must be *fresh influence*, or actual strength derived from Christ, for the assistance, succour, and support of a Believer on all occasions: And this influence is imparted to us from Christ, by vertue of our being knit to him.

No union with the Son, no communication of spiritual strength and influence from the Son, Isa. 45. 24. *Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.* In the Lord] *that is*, in Jesus, the Mediator, who is *Jehovah* God blessed for ever. *In him*, or through him, by vertue of my being in him, I have not only righteousness, but strength also; *that is*, actual grace to help in the times of need. It plainly relateth unto Christ, unto whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear, v. 23. *Upon which Text the Apostle himself is a Commentator*, Rom. 14. 10, 11. I will endeavour to make this very plain to your understandings (being a matter of much weight and moment as to the life of Religion) by handling it *in a way of gradation*, in three steps.

1. In the first place you must remember, *That a Christian is not able to keep on in his journey towards heaven, so as to arrive with safety at that everlasting Kingdom, only by the strength of habitual grace bestowed upon him in his first conversion; but there must be a daily communication of further grace unto the soul, or of fresh actual strength conveyed into the soul.* It is not enough that the principles of holiness be at first formed in the heart, but there must be a constant supply of fresh influence imparted to us, or else we should quickly fall short in our travel towards *Canaan*. As the air is not maintained in light, barely by the first rising of the Sun upon it, expelling darkness out of the air, & spreading abroad his beams into it: but there must be a constant issuing forth of fresh beams from the Sun, and streamings forth of new influence into the air: else it would quickly return to its former darkness. Let but the Sun go down, or some *opaconi* body interpose to hinder

hinder the fresh beamings of it forth, and the air would presently become black again; notwithstanding the first light that was put into it. *Thus it is in our spiritual concernments*, We cannot be maintained in a state of favour with God, and carried on to glory, meerly by the strength of habitual grace, planted at first within us, in our regeneration: but there must be further grace imparted to us. The beams of the Sun of righteousness must be still issuing forth upon us *fresh and fresh*; or else we should quickly tarter in the working out our salvation. This fresh influence of the Holy Ghost is usually called in the Schools *Actual grace*: And in the Scripture you have it under the name of *The supplies of the spirit*, *

Phil. 1. 19. *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.*

* *Spiritus subministratio et præsidium, & consolatio, & omnes spiritus sancti bonum quo servamur contra omnia scandala.* Eras. Sacr. ex Marl.

Mark it Sirs, As there is a standing stock of habitual holiness put into the soul in the day of conversion; so there is a constant supply given forth upon all occasions for maintaining and promoting of that stock. As there is the regenerating work of the Spirit, so there are additional incomes or supplies of the same Spirit: Which are elsewhere called *The strengthenings of the Spirit*, Eph. 3. 16. *That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.* There is the inner man, the new creature principally seated within, the hidden man of the heart; and there is auxiliary strength shed abroad every day afresh into the inner man. This is a matter heedfully to be regarded, and that calleth for

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our most serious thoughts, in the study of it; and that *for three reasons.*

1. *Because*, herein doth lie a special difference between the state of man in his primitive perfection, under the Covenant of works; and the state of believers under the Covenant of peace and reconciliation: and indeed the excellency and stedfastness of the latter, above the former. In the state of innocency man had a sufficient stock of holiness, and spiritual power to manage; but now in Christ there is provision made for constant supplies, to carry us on in the management thereof. Under the Covenant of works man had *power to stand, if he would*: but in the Covenant of grace there is fresh strength also provided, *to work in us both to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. There is not only a new heart, and a new spirit given to the servants of Christ, whereby they are qualified and disposed to the keeping of God's statutes: But a further actual ability is imparted unto them, whereby they are caused to walk in the way of those Statutes, Ezek. 36. 26, 27.

2. *From hence it many times cometh to pass*, that weak Christians stand fast in those trials, wherein the stronger fall; and overcome the temptation, whereby *they* are foiled. Here you have a great reason of the difference, that is between one Believer and another in the same case, and under the like trial. A *Peter* may fall foully, who is a *pillar in the Church, a cedar in the Forest*: and another may stand fast, in the same hour of temptation, who is in comparison *but a shrub*, and *of low stature in the faith*. How can this be? whence doth it proceed? *Why*, though the strong Christian hath arrived at an higher pitch and degree, in respect of habitual

bitual grace; yet resting upon himself for strength, God might justly be provoked to leave him unto himself: And he who is weaker in the faith, as to the habits of grace, yet keeping his spirit in a constant dependance upon the Lord, * might have more actual assistance imparted to him, so as to be inabled to hold on his way, when the other shrinks back. This is palpably apparent in the example of *Peter*, who was a man of great forwardness and courage in the cause of Christ; yet how shamefully did he deny his Master? Because trusting in his own strength, the Lord was pleased to withdraw his actual assistance, that he might learn thereafter to live in the sense of his own weakness. Thus *Hezekiah* fell in the business of the Embassadors of the King of *Babylon*, although he was a man of eminent piety: yet *the Lord left him*, and then corruption discovered it self, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. *How did God leave him?* Not as to the principle of habitual grace; for that is an abiding principle, never taken from a person on whom it is once conferred: But *God left him*, as to these fresh supplies of the spirit; he with-held from him, for that time, such efficacious assistance, as whereby he might have vanquished the temptation: and then his deceitful heart prevailed and carried him aside.

* *Sentiam quia semper in spiro in me, ut cogitem: compelle, ut faciam; suade, ut diligam: confirma me, ut te tenam: custodi me, ut te perdam.* Aug.

3. *This is a point which deserveth well to be studied*, not only that we may be provoked thereby, to live in a constant dependance upon God for further grace, to help in the time of need: but likewise, *that we may be stirred up to give all the glory of*

our salvation, from first to last, *unto the Lord only*. He doth not only quicken us when we are dead, but followeth us with fresh strength when we are quickened, or else we should soon depart away from him. As he begins the work of grace, when the sinner is without strength: so it is God alone can perfect it by the residue of his Spirit. And therefore to him appertaineth the glory of the whole, *Heb.* 13. 21. This is the *first thing* to be noted, viz. the necessity of the supplies of the Spirit, to be dealt forth unto Believers; or of fresh actual strength to be derived upon them.

2. *These supplies of the Spirit, or this actual grace, which is of such absolute necessity to conduct a Christian to heaven, is treasured up in Jesus Christ*, and by him to be communicated unto the children of men. As our righteousness is in him, so all our spiritual ability is from him also, *Phil.* 4. 13. *I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.* The holy Ghost in this work doth act by commission from Christ. He is the great Depositary in whose hands all this actual grace is put, and with whom it is treasured up, that it may be imparted out of his fulness. He is *the finisher*, as well as *the author* of our faith, *Heb.* 12. 2.

3. To compleat this argument, and to bring the matter home, *observe*, That *these supplies of the Spirit, which are laid up in Christ, are communicated and imparted unto us, by virtue of our union with the Lord Jesus.* No conjunction with Christ, and no communication of influence from him. Except the member be knit by bands and ligaments unto the head, it can partake of no vertue from the head. Except the sience be grafted into the stock, and abide therein, it can receive nothing of the sap and juiciness

juiciness thereof: So neither can we receive supplies from Christ, unless we be joyned unto Christ, and abide in him. These are the Scripture comparisons in this case, *Col. 2. 19. And not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministred and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.* As if the Apostle had said, Christ is the head, and ye are the members; and if you would receive any vigour and nourishment from the head, you must hold the head: if you let go your hold of the head, you must of necessity be deprived of the nourishment that cometh from thence, *Joh. 15. 5, 6. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered*; *q. d.* If you are not united to me, your profession will be blasted, and your gifts and common graces will soon decay, and you will go backward in Religion. You must be sure to get into Christ, or else all your attainments will come to nothing, for want of fresh influence to be derived upon you. Actual grace is imparted unto us from the Lord Jesus, by the intervention and means of our union with him.

I will make it clear by an *induction of the particulars.* Actual grace may be considered in the production of a *sevenfold effect*, and in each respect it is dispensed unto believers, by vertue of their conjunction and oneness with Christ.

There

There is *Actual* { 1. *Exciting* 2. *Co-operating* 3. *Resisting* 4. *Supporting* 5. *Restoring* 6. *Increasing* 7. *Stablishing* } grace.

1. There is *Exciting grace*, whereby the principle of holiness is awakened, and stirred up, and put into a readiness unto that which is good. For although there are habits of grace alwayes resident in the hearts of the godly, yet those habits are not alwayes in a present apteness and preparedness unto the matters of godliness. What a listlessness and heavinesse is oftentimes upon the heart of a sincere Christian? So that he hath grace to seek, when he is called to the exercise of it: he is not in a readiness to bring it forth into act. And therefore we have need frequently to quicken our hearts, and to awaken and stir up the grace of God that is within us. It was the complaint of the Lord against his people, that they did not *stir up themselves to take hold of him*, Isa. 64. 7. There needeth exciting grace and assistance, to stir us up unto practical holiness; that our loyns may be girt, and our lamps burning, and our selves [*in procinctu*] in a readiness to every good work; as the exhortation is, *Luk.* 12. 35. *Tit.* 3. 1. How much is *David* in prayer, that God would quicken him? *Psal.* 119. 37. *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way*, Psal. 80. 18. *Quicken us, and we will call upon thy name*, Psal. 86. 11. *Unite mine heart to fear thy name*; *q. d.* Gather the forces of my soul together, that they may conspire, as in one, to this purpose. All my powers are apt to be

be wandring and out of the way: when I have use for them, then they are to seek: O Lord call them in, and put them into a readiness. Now this exciting influence proceedeth from Christ, and is given forth unto them that are ingrafted into him. It is he that knocketh at the door of the heart, to awaken believers out of their security; and to put them into a posture, that they may be ready to follow him whithersoever he shall lead them, *Cant.* 5. 2.

2. There is *Co-operating grace*, or assistance to do the will of God: whereby the new creature is set on work, and inabled to walk in the way of Gods commandments. For *Sirs*, herein lieth a vast difference between the principles of sin, which are naturally seated in the soul, and the habits of holiness which in the new birth are introduced into the soul. The principles of sin can work of themselves, without any forreign assistance to reduce them into act. If there were no devil to tempt us unto ungodliness, the corrupt heart of man would be a tempter to it self, *Jam.* 1. 14. and would rush on into wickedness of its own accord: But the habits of grace cannot act of themselves, there must be renewed strength imparted to set them on work, which we may fitly call *co-operating grace*, Psal. 119. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight.* Though *David* had a spirit of new life within him, yet he could not actually walk in the path of God's precepts, till by an additional force he was set a going. *Cant.* 4. 16. *Awake, O North wind, and come thou South-wind, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.* By the *garden*, understand a sanctified soul; and by the *spices* in this garden may be meant the several

several graces planted in the soul. Now these spices can never flow out, and send forth their fragrant smell, till the wind comes and bloweth upon them. Habitual grace cannot operate, and dilate, and put forth it self into exercise, till by the concurrent assistance of the Spirit it is educed into act. And this co-operating assistance is in Christ, and issued forth unto them that are one with him, 2 *Tim.* 2. 1. *Thou therefore, my Son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* That is, Get assistance from him, out of his fulness, to strengthen thee to the discharge of the work of the Lord.

3. There is *resisting grace*, to oppose temptations unto sin, and to vanquish and overcome the assaults of the devil. Although in the first work of conversion there is a secret antipathy set up in the spirit against sin; yet if you would be actually free from the taint of it, there must be *further strength* to help you, in grapling with temptations unto sin. And this also is in Christ, to be communicated unto his members, *Eph.* 6. 10. The Apostle doth exhort us to *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Not to enter the lists in our own strength, but *to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* And the spiritual combate maintained by a child of God is called *The fight of faith*: because sin is especially opposed by the exercise of faith, and the victory obtained through faith in Jesus; by which, fresh supplies of strength are fetcht down from him, 1 *Tim.* 6. 12.

4. The fourth sort of actual strength is *supporting grace*, for the bearing such burdens as are laid upon us. Strength to inable us, with an holy quietness, and submission, to endure afflictions and hardships,

ships. And whence is this to be had but from our Lord Jesus? *Phil.* 1. 29. *Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake; that is* (to take it in the largest acceptation) you have this dignity conferred upon you to be witnesses for Christ, to be counted worthy to suffer in his cause; and you have ability ministred to carry you through sufferings, to keep your hearts from sinking in the day of tribulation, and adversity. As you are called to suffer, so through the supplies of Christ's Spirit you are impowered and fortified thereunto.

5. *Restoring grace*, To recover us out of that deadness, into which we are apt to fall; and to call us back from those decayes unto which believers are subject. For though habitual grace shall never be quite lost, yet the vigour of it may be much abated: in which respect a Believer may be said *to lose his first love*, Rev. 2. 4. And though grace remain, yet in this sense it may be said *to be ready to die*, Rev. 3, 2. Now for the restoring of a mans soul to its former life and activity, and reviving upon the new man its ancient lustre and beauty, there must be fresh strength communicated. Which *reviving strength* is stored up in the Son, and given forth to them that have the Son. It is by the fresh beams of the Sun of righteousness, that the clouds are dispelled, and the mists are driven away; and the soul of a Christian is made to *look forth as the morning*: according as it is expressed, *Cant.* 6. 10.

6. There is *increasing grace* for augmentation of the principle of holiness; that the new man may arrive at his full growth and stature unto which he is appointed. And it is by grace which is in Jesus

Christ the head, and by fresh influence out of his fulness, that the *body maketh increase unto the edifying of it self*, Eph. 4. 16.

7. Lastly, *establishing* and *confirming grace*, whereby Believers are fixed and settled unto the end. And this likewise is from Christ, by vertue of union with him. It is *in Jesus Christ we are preserved*, Jude 1. *Being rooted in him, we become established in the faith*, Col. 2. 7.

So much for the *third signal mercy* or *blessing* which floweth from ingrafture into Christ, and hath dependance thereupon: namely, *The communication of the supplies of the Spirit.*

4. A *fourth mercy* that depends upon having the Son, or union with the Son, is, *The gracious acceptation of all our service and duties.* Take an unconverted sinner, and he may do many things in Religion; he may suffer much upon a religious account, and be at much cost and expence in his profession and practise; And the God of heaven hath no regard unto it. Herein lieth the misery of a man out of Christ, that whatsoever he doth for God, is not accepted of the Lord. He may make many prayers, and lose all his labour therein: For the ears of the God of heaven are shut against them, *Isa.* 1. 15. *When you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when you make many prayers I will not hear.* When you spread forth your hands] *that is*, Although you call upon me with never so much seeming earnestness; although you seek after me in a solemn & *seemingly* affectionate maner, with your hands stretched out towards heaven: *I will hide mine eyes from you*] *i. e.* I will not so much as mind what you are doing, in a way of mercy: your duties are lothsom unto me, I cannot

cannot endure the sight of them. And *when you multiply to pray*, I will be so far from granting your requests, that I will turn away my self in disdain from you: I will not so much as give you the hearing. O what a sad word is this to the ungodly! They trust in their duties, when the Lord abhorreth them. See another Text setting forth their deplorable condition in this respect, *Jer.7. 21. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.* It is unto the wicked he is speaking, and it amounts to this. *As if he had said*, Keep your duties to your selves, I will have nothing to do with them: make your best of your offerings, and never bring them unto me, as long as you live in your iniquities. Their burnt offerings, or *Holocausts*, were wholly to be burnt; but as for their sacrifices, the offerers themselves might eat some part of them. Now *saith God to those impenitent sinners*, Take them and and eat them both; put them together, and use them your selves, make your best advantage of them, for I regard them not. *Mark it*, These were costly duties, and in respect to their signification they were Evangelical duties: but whilst they were still in their sins, God hath no delight in them. What course then shall a man take, that his sacrifices may be accepted? *Why*, he must get into Christ, and be knit to him: for this is a mercy which floweth from union with him. Then, if he offer up his duties in the Name of Christ, the work is owned, and the concomitant infirmities will be passed over. *Particularly*, then his supplications and prayers shall be graciously answered: which is a mercy of inexpressible worth and value. Such a person may ask whatever he will, and it shall be

 given.

given. The Lord will with-hold no good thing from him, *Joh.* 15. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* O what a mercy is this, to have the King's ear? the ear of the King of kings? Your heavenly Father will deny you nothing. And for the general acceptance of all their duties of God's appointment, *consult the Text*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; *q. d.* Then your performances will be accepted through him, when ye your selves are built upon him, and cemented unto him. Here is another proof of the indispensable necessity of this Union, *No having the Son*, and *no acceptation of any duties whatsoever.*

5. *Another blessing* which floweth from union with Christ, and is attainable only thereby, is, *a title to the promises of the Gospel*, which concern this life, or that which is to come. And this is a matter of unspeakable concernment: for if you would enjoy the mercies conveyed by the promises, you must have an interest in the promises. You must secure a title to them, as your heritage, and portion; and then they will prove a rich treasury, or magazine, to furnish you with every thing needful for life, comfort, and happiness. There can be nothing desired for the advancement of a mans welfare, which is not contained therein. The promises are the foundation on which our hope is bottomed; Indeed herein it differs from presumption, which expects mercy from God, without a word of promise, to warrant the expectation thereof. But good hope *through grace* is built upon the word, *Psal.* 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy servant,*

vant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. If a person entertain strong hopes of mercy, and salvation, without a word for it, or against the word; that is hope of the devils causing: or such as proceedeth from the delusion and cozenage of his own Spirit: it will prove such an hope as will make him ashamed at length; and will be like the giving up the Ghost. When God causeth a man to hope, it is built upon the word; *that is*, the word of promise, whereby mercy is entailed upon the servants of the Lord. And, *pray mark it Sirs*, you can have no title to the promises, so as to rest upon them, and to be able to plead them with God, and to lay hold upon them as your heritage, till you have the Son, and are knit unto Jesus: For *in him they are established.* They are part of the inheritance prepared for the Saints; and unless a person be married to the heir, he can lay no just claim to the inheritance, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. *For in him all the promises of God are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.* And therefore the promise is laid to be given *through faith in Christ, Gal.* 3. 22. *that is*, A title to the promise, or the enjoyment of the mercy promised, is made over to a sinner by faith in Christ: by that uniting grace, which joyneth us unto Christ.

This is the *fifth special mercy* depending upon union with the Son. Except you have the Son, the Mediator of the Covenant; you can have no right to the promises contained in the Covenant. *Your title to them, doth result and flow from your oneness with him.*

6. There is *Union with God the Father*, and an intimate acquaintance with him. Whilst out of Christ,

we are at a distance from the Father: *yea*, at an enmity with him. He is a consuming fire, and we are as so much bryars and thornes: and it were a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But by having the Son, that distance is removed, and the enmity taken away, and we are knit unto God; so as to have fellowship and communion with him. As Christ is in the Father, and the Father in him: so Believers by being in Christ, are in the Father also, *Joh.* 17. 21. *That they also may be one in us.* Not only in Jesus the Mediator, but in the Father likewise, by means of their being in Jesus. So 1 *Thess.* 1. 1. *Unto the Church of the* Thessalonians, *which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ.* It was the end of Christ's sufferings in the flesh, that he might bring sinners unto God; and by vertue of their union with the Son they are actually brought unto him, and knit unto the Father also. O what a wonderful advancement is this, to sinful dust and ashes! To poor despicable creatures, that dwell in houses of clay! With what astonishment should it fill us? What a spring-head of all manner of consolation is here? Who would not be a Christian? *not only almost, but altogether*? Who would not have fellowship, and hold a correspondency with the Saints? For *truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*: as the Apostle mentioneth it by way of gloriation and boasting, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3.

This is the *sixth fundamental blessing*. By having the Son, they have the Father also.

7. A Believers union with Christ, is the ground of all that *peace and joy in the holy Ghost*, which putteth

true

true gladness into the heart, and life and sweetness into every condition, and providence. The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment, and the pleasures of sin are poor, empty, external pleasures: In the midst of laughter, the heart is in bitterness: they have many a secret griping of conscience, that spoileth their mirth; and many a fearful surprizal upon their spirits, that marreth all their jollity. Let them be set in the midst of their riotings and revellings, their banquettings and carowsings, amidst all the content and pleasure that sin and the world can afford: and one serious thought of judgment to come, will overturn it wholly: one flash of hell in the conscience, will put an end to their rejoycings. It will quickly betal them as it betel *Belshazzar*; The appearance but of the likeness of a mans fingers upon the wall, made his *countenance change*, and his *thoughts trouble him*, and *the joints of his loyns to be loosed*, and *his knees to smite one against another*: and that, when he was in the top of his gallantry, and in the height of his merriment, *Dan.* 5. 5, 6. O, *thinks the poor carnal wretch*, what will become of my precious and immortal soul? Can all these enjoyments deliver me from the pit of destruction? *Who can dwell with everlasting burnings? Isa.* 33. 14. But the people of God have such peace as passeth understanding: such a sweet calm and tranquillity in their spirits, that they can rejoyce with joy unspeakable, even in the midst of afflictions. The joy of the ungodly is worse than sorrow: It is but a fit of madness, proceeding from ignorance of the state they are in. If they knew but their own condition, it would fill them with vexation, and horror and anguish of heart: But *great peace* have they that fear the Lord

and are in Covenant with him, * nothing shall offend them, *Psal.* 119. 165. Their portion is *peace, peace*; that is, perfect peace, nothing but peace and serenity which will put gladness into the heart, greater than the joy of harvest, *Isa.* 26. 3. And, *pray*, whence doth this peace arise? *Why*, originally from their union with Christ: All peace out of him will end in sadness: it is but as the crackling of thornes under a pot. In him our consolation is stored up, and given forth by vertue of our conjunction with him, *Joh.* 16. 33. *These things have I spoken to you, that in me ye might have peace.* If any of the children of God are under disquietness and perplexities upon their spirits, it is for want of the evidences of their union with Christ; or through their neglect of the right improvement thereof. For here is a fountain to fill up a Believers joy, *Joh.* 15. 11. *These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might remain with you, and that your joy might be full.* What were those things which Christ had spoken to them? It was the doctrine of a Believers ingrafture into him, and abiding in him; and the consequents and concomitants thereof: in the former part of that Chap. So that, *no union with Christ, no solid peace or satisfaction in the soul*; no true joy in the Spirit: For all manner of consolation and revivings from him, depend upon our oneness with him.

* *Meditationes rerum divinarum voluptates sensus, non tantum potestate, sed etiam suavitate superant.* Becon. de sap. Veter.

8. It is a believers union with the Lord Jesus, which giveth him *deliverance from the sting and curse of death: and consequentially, from the fear of that king of terrors.* It is this conjunction with the Son, which maketh the last change, to be a comfortable

fortable and happy exchange, that altereth the nature of death, from a curse into a blessing. So that a Christian is able to bid it welcome, and to look it in the face with boldness: it being disarmed as far as it is an enemy, and having the venom and malignity taken out of it. This is a very precious and unvaluable mercy: For it is the fear of death which keepeth sinners all their life time, in bondage; and puts a kind of *Coloquintida* into every enjoyment. O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that is at ease? to every impenitent sinner? There is a terriblenes to the unregenerate, in the apprehensions of death, upon every account: But *as it is the passage unto eternity*, it is the greatest of terrors, *Job* 18. 14. *Mark it*, I say, there is a dread in the thoughts of it every way. Death may be considered in a *threefold respect*. 1. As it is a *dissolution*, between the soul and the body: as it parts and separates those ancient friends, which have long conversed intimately together. And thus it startleth a sinner, to think of leaving his old habitation, having no better provided in the stead of it: But a Believer can triumph in this respect, and say with the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* 2. If you consider it as it is a *period*, and puts an end to all worldly accommodations; so it cannot but perplex a sinner. The place of his habitation shall know him no more: he shall be then stripped and divested of whatever earthly comforts have been dear unto him: His heart is glewed unto the world, and what anguish and bitterness must it needs create, to think of being taken from all? But now a child of God hath some-

thing

thing to counterballance this loss, *even a better, and far more enduring substance*, *Heb.* 10. 34. 3. As death is *a passage unto eternity*, so it is dreadful indeed. O *thinks the sinner*, what will become of my soul for ever? When I go hence and be no more upon the Land of the living, into what chains of darkness, what an eternal prison must I be sent, amongst devils and damned spirits? But a sincere Christian can cheerfully welcom it, under this consideration also. He knoweth it is but a messenger sent from his heavenly Father, to conduct him home to his mansion place; and to bring him into neerer fellowship with his Redeemer. It puts an end to all sin, and temptations, and troubles of every sort; and opens a door of entrance into unspeakable joyes that shall never end. O *Sirs*, what a priviledge is this to be able to triumph over death? It is that unto which we are subject every moment: *and what is that which will sweeten the passage, and remove the fears which are usually attendant upon the contemplation of it? *Why*, It is our interest in Christ, and union with him. He drank that bitter cup, yea, the very dregs of it, that he might sweeten it unto such as are in him, 1 *Cor.* 15. 53, 54, 55. *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Christ tasted an accursed death, that it might be made a blessing to his members, *Rev.* 14. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the*

* *Quotidie morimur, quotidie enim demitur aliqua pars vitæ: Et tunc quoque cum crescimus, vita decrescit.---Hunc ipsum quem agimus diem, cum morte dividimus.* Sen. Epist. 24.

the dead which die in the Lord. It is not a being called Christians which will render the day of death a blessed day; nor an outward attendance upon Christ: but getting into him. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.*

9. A believers union with Jesus Christ, is a sure inlet unto a *glorious resurrection out of the dust of the earth*: when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. And therefore *observe it Sirs*, Although the wicked shall be raised at the last day as well as the godly, yet not by the same means through which the godly are raised. The wicked shall be raised *by the power of Christ as a Judge*: but Believers shall rise again *by vertue of their oneness with Christ*, and neer relation unto him, 1 *Cor.* 15. 22, 23. *For as in* Adam *all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming.* Such as sleep in Jesus, shall awake by vertue of their being in him: and thereupon their vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like to his glorious body. * To which that passage of the Prophet *Isaiah* may be fitly referred; which though it primarily be intended of outward deliverance, and the wonderful restauration of the Church, out of such a forlorn & desperate estate, as that they were as dead: yet it may extend also to the last re-

* Rom. 8. 11. He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by [*or because*] his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Vivificari in hac sententia significat resurrectionem gloriosam, quæ similis est Christi resurrectioni, & propria bonis in quibus inhabitat spiritus. Illud autem [Propter inhabitantem spiritum ejus] ad Christum refertur, non ad Deum. Et in hoc est argumenti efficacia, quia enim spiritus hic Dei qui in nobis habitat; etiam Christi est.

Sicut Christum ut homo, à Patre suscitatus est; ità & nos suscitabimur qui eundem cum Christo spiritum habemus. Tolet. in loc.

resurrection; of which that eminent deliverance was but a shadow and resemblance, *Isa.* 26. 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall give up her dead.* This is *another blessing* which floweth from this fountain.

10. Our union with Christ Jesus will minister *boldness at the bar of Judgment:* and cause us to lift up our faces without spot or confusion at that great and notable day of the Lord. How will the wicked be ashamed to look Christ in the face at that day, seeing that now they despise him, and trample his blood under their feet? seeing that now they slight his word, and contemn his Ordinances, and his people? *Then the Kings, and the chief Captains, and the great men, and the mighty men, and every bondman and freeman;* I mean, all impenitent sinners of what rank or quality soever; *Will be ready to call upon the rocks to fall upon them, and the mountains to cover them from the presence of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* Then what would not a man give to be able to assure his heart before Christ at his appearance? and to be of the number of Christ's followers, that shall stand at his right hand, when the ungodly are trembling at the left? *Why,* It is not all the substance of a man's house can purchase this priviledge; It is not all your prayers and tears at that day that can do it; (though you should cry out your heart blood) if you are unconverted sinners. But it depends wholly upon your union with Christ, 1 *Joh* 2. 28. *And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall*

shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming, 1 Thess. 4. 14. *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* Mark it, He will summon the wicked before him; but such as are members of his body he will bring with him; *i. e.* in his train and company, under his own shelter; and protection. Christ himself will undertake the patronage of their cause, and to silence all the accusations of Satan, which are brought in against them. Well may they exult, and be glad; for it will be the day of the *consummation of their marriage* with their Redeemer. If now they are espoused and contracted, then they shall be married with the greatest solemnity, in the presence of God and of his holy Angels. Then will that vision be most notably fulfilled, *Rev.* 21. 2, 3, 4. *I* John *saw the holy City, new* Jerusalem, *coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband.*

This is the *tenth mercy* which depends upon our union with Christ.

11. *Lastly,* It is our having the Son, or being united unto the Son which will give us *actual admission into the kingdom of glory*: and possession of the inheritance prepared for the Saints. When the wicked are sent into everlasting punishment, then shall the righteous inherit eternal life. When the ungodly are thrust together into hell, then shall believers dwell in the presence of God for ever: and drink of the rivers of pleasures, which are at his right hand: and be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of him, unto all eternity. And this by vertue of their union with the Son of God; and because they are so neerly related unto him,

Job.

Joh. 17. 22. The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them. Who are these of whom our Saviour speaketh? *Why*, such as are in Christ, and in God the Father through Christ, *v.* 21. And again *v.* 24. *Father I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.* So that all sorts of blessings are conveyed in this way: from the leading mercy of forgiveness of sin, to the very consummation of a believers happiness. First God doth unite his people unto Christ, and then he doth bless them with all subsequent blessings in Christ; from the acceptance of their persons, to the very crown of righteousness. So much shall suffice to be spoken unto the *fifth general head of enquiry*, touching the signal benefits that flow from our union with Christ; and for evincing the necessity thereof.

CHAP. IX.

The special similitudes, made use of in the Scriptures, for illustration of this Mystery, of Union with Christ.

6. THere is yet one question more to be answered, before I come to the Application and practical improvement of the Point. The question is this.

Qu. *What are the special similitudes, or resemblances which the holy Ghost is pleased to make use of, for illustration of this mystery, of a believers union with the Lord Jesus Christ?*

Answ. I answer, *There are principally four.* Which I shall

I shall not handle at large, as if I designed to shew you, in all particulars that might be reckoned up, wherein the proportion holds: Only I will select a few things, under each of those *similitudes*, which will be most obvious, and apposite to our purpose; and of greatest use for giving us light into this mystery and priviledge.

A Believers union with Christ is illustrated by comparisons taken from the	1. *Natural.*	*Union*, that there is between the	1. *Head and members* of the natural body.
	2. *Corporal.*		2. *Vine and branches* grafted into the vine.
	3. *Conjugal.*		3. *Husband and Wife*, married together.
	4. *Artificial.*		4. *Foundation and building*, erected thereupon.

1. The *first similitude* which I shall open, for the further illustration of the grace of union with Christ, is taken *from the head and members of the natural body.* The Lord Jesus the Mediator is the head of the Church, and his people are his body; and every individual Saint is a member of that body; so they are compacted and knit together. Thus the holy Ghost doth condescend, in compliance with our weakness, to shadow forth heavenly things under the figure of earthly, *Col.* 1. 18. *And he is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the prehemineuce.*

In

In pursuance of this comparison, I will lightly touch upon *five things*.

1. The Lord Jesus may be fitly compared to the *Head*, and his peculiar people to the *body*, in divers respects.

In respect of	1. *Dominion and government over* 2. *Inspection, and care of the affairs of* 3. *Influence, and vertue derived from him upon* 4. *His completion, and perfecting by* 5. *Intimate conjunction, and union with*	the Church.

1. He is the Head of the Church, *In point of dominion and government.* Christ is ordained and constituted to be the Lord, and ruler of his people; unto whom they are to be in subjection, and whose prescriptions they are to follow. He hath the supremacy and soveraignty. As the head is over the body: not only *locally* superior, or above it; but hath the rule and guidance thereof; and the several members obey, and follow the dictates of the head: so is Christ set as King upon the holy hill of *Sion*, as Lord over the Church to govern it, *Mic.* 5. 2. *But thou* Bethlehem Ephrata, *though thou be little amongst the thousands of* Judah, *yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me*, that is *to be ruler in* Israel: *whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* Isa. 9. 7. *Of the increase of his* [Christ's] *government, and peace, there shall be no end; upon the throne of* David *and upon his kingdom, to order it and to stablish it, with judgment and justice, from henceforth even for ever.* Such as take upon them to govern the Church,

Church, must be sure to act *as Christ's substitutes*; and be able to shew their commission from him: and act no further than his commission reacheth: else they are guilty of usurpation, and intrenchment upon Christ's prerogative. He is the head and governor; who hath the keys of the house of *David*. He is the *Legislator*, to make Laws and Ordinances for the Church, and there is none besides him, *Jam.* 4. 12. *There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy.* Christ is ordained to be the Judge to call men to an account, for the observance of his Laws and Statutes, *Act.* 17. 31. In all things he hath the preheminence, *for he is the head of the body.*

2. Christ is the Head of the Church, *In respect of inspection, and care of the affairs thereof.* The head is full of thoughts and prudential foresight, for the good of the body; and maketh it its business to contrive and order all things for the benefit and advantage thereof: to give warning of dangers, that they may be avoided; and to find out wayes for the avoiding them: to propound matters that will tend to the advancement of the welfare of the body, and to pitch upon the likeliest means and instruments, for the bringing such matters about. So Christ looketh into the concernments of his Church, and taketh care that all things be managed, to promote the welfare thereof. He hath the care of the Church committed to him, to see that nothing befal it, which may be hurtful; and that all things be carried on in a due subserviency to the good of it, and of every faithful member thereof, *Isa.* 27. 2, 3. *In that day, sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine: I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*

The Church here is compared to a vineyard, that bringeth forth fruit unto God: and the Lord himself hath undertaken the charge and custody of it. So that if you get into Christ, you need not be troubled at events, what may befal you: you may cast your care upon him, who is the keeper of *Israel*, and will take the care of you. He will *destroy the little foxes that spoil the vines*, as his care is set forth, *Cant.* 2. 15. He will root up the errors, that endanger the faith of his people: and pluck up the Schisms, that tend to the destruction of their peace; further than may be fit to exercise them for their good, and to make manifest such as are approved. He will weed up the corruptions out of the hearts of his people, and in due time put a stop to the rage of persecutors: and whatever is noxious and prejudicial shall be averted, and taken out of the way.

3. He is the head of the Church, *In respect of influence, and vertue derived from him, upon it.* As from the head are derived the animal spirits, for motion and sensation in the body, and by it vigour and activity is put into the body: So Christ doth minister unto the supply of his Church, and people, on all occasions. By him the Spirit is sent down from above, and all their vacuities are filled up, *Phil.* 4. 19. *My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.* That's the third respect of his headship.

4. *In respect of his completion, and perfecting by the Church.* The head is not compleat without the body: Every part and member thereof doth help to the perfection of the whole. Thus doth the Lord Jesus vouchsafe to speak of his Church. He will surely bring every son to glory, for he reckoneth him-

himself imperfect, till his body be filled up. And therefore the Church which is his body, is called *The fulness of him that filleth all in all, Eph.* 1. 23. In his *person* he is compleat, without the least taint of an imperfection: As to his *Godhead* he is infinite, he filleth all in all: But as he is *the head of his Church* he accounts himself to be defective, till all his people are gathered unto him.

5. Christ is the Head of the Church, *upon the account of their near relation to him, and intimate union with him.* They are as closly knit together, as the body is to the head. And this is true, not only of the *Church in general*; but every *particular Christian* is united unto the head, and partaketh of the influence of it, 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.* That's the *first thing* to be noted under this similitude.

2. In pursuance of this comparison, *observe further*, That the way wherein a Believer is knit unto Christ, it is *by being quickned through the Spirit of Jesus Christ.* For wherein lieth the conjunction betwee n the head & the body? *Why* principally in this, that they are both animated with the same soul. There is nothing properly and strictly, a part of the body, unless it partake of life with it. So the Saints are quickned by the Spirit of the Son; thereby he joyneth them to himself, and inableth them to take hold of him, and cleave unto him, * *Eph.* 2. 5. *Even when we were dead in sins and trespasses, he hath quickned us together with Christ*: with the same Spirit wherewith Christ himself was endowed; with the holy

* *ut Christus similitudinem capitis naturalis gerit, & Ecclesia corporis naturalis, ita illorum tantum Rex & caput Christus est: quia in eos tantum vivificatem spiritus virtutem infundit. Et vicissim, corpus Christi*

electi soli sunt, quia soli Christo tanquam à capite naturali spiritualiter vegetantur. Paul. de Pol. Eccles.

Christus non aliter caput est, quam ut Ecclesiæ vitam præbet. Whitak.

Ghost which is poured forth upon him. And if we are alive unto God, it is through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Rom.* 6. 11.

3. According to the tenour of this resemblance, If we are made one with our Lord Jesus, *we must of necessity give up ourselves in subjection to him, and be ready to follow his conduct.* The members of the body are subject to the head: As the head dictates and commands, so the hands work, and the feet walk, and the rest of the body is ordered. Such an authority must Christ have over us, and we must be in a readiness to close, and comply with his directions, and counsels: Or else it will be evident that we stand not in the relation of members to him as our Head, *Rev.* 14. 4. *These are they which follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth: these were redeemed from amongst men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb*; that is, These who are the redeemed of the Lord, are a people wholly dedicated and consecrated unto the service of Christ; and to the worship of God in Christ; as the first fruits were set apart unto the Lord, and devoted unto him. As the first fruits were but an handful in comparison of the whole crop, so they were consecrated unto the most high: and thus are God's redeemed ones. They are ready prest to be at Christ's beck, and to follow his guidance. See *Eph.* 5. 23, 24. *Christ is the head of the Church, and the Saviour of the body*; and therefore *the Church is subject unto him.*

4. This Metaphor taken from the head and members of the body, over and above its representing the union of believers with Christ, doth hold

hold forth *that unity and concord which Christians should maintain amongst themselves:* and that mutual love & tenderness, wch they ought to entertain one towards another. They are members of one body, whereof Christ is the Head: and therefore it is unseemly, nay it is unnatural, for divisions to be amongst them. If one member be weak, will the other enter into contest with it, and be filled with indignation against it? Doth not the whole body suffer, with one member that suffereth? And do they not mutually rejoyce, at each others welfare? So should sincere Christians be kindly affectionated one towards another, with brotherly love: the weak should rejoyce with the strong; and the strong bearing with the infirmities of the weak, should help them; and not be filled with wrath and bitterness amongst themselves. It is an argument often pressed to this purpose, *Eph.* 4. 3, 4. *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit*; *q. d.* Is it not a shame for you to fall out by the way? *Why*, you are brethren, nay members of the same mystical body; animated by the same Spirit, made partakers of the same workings of the Holy Ghost, and under the conduct of the same head: see to it, that there be no contentions amongst you; that you live at peace and amity between your selves. This consideration is largely insisted on to this purpose, 1 *Cor.* 12, 13. to 25. *v.*

5. As our Lord Jesus the Mediator of the Covenant of peace and reconciliation, hath a peculiar relation of Headship unto the Church; *so he is made the head of all things, for the good and benefit of the Church.* He is the Head of his own people, in respect of union with them; but in point of rule

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and providential disposal of affairs, he is the Head of all things, for their good. This is a matter of wonderful comfort to Believers. Art thou an *Israelite* indeed? a Disciple of Christ in reality? Be not afraid, there is nothing in the world can hurt thee, or hinder thy salvation: For *that* Jesus, unto whom thou art joyned, is ordained of God to be the head of all things; and that unto this very intent, that he might guide and govern them in a subordination to the good of his servants. * So I understand that Text, *Eph.* 1. 22. *He hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things, to the Church, which is his body.* Mark it, in a peculiar sense he is the head of the Church, which is his body: but in point of rule and authority, he is exalted as head over all things, to the Church *i. e.* with respect to his peoples good, that he may dispose and manage them for their best advantage, according to that, *Joh.* 3. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.* And *Col.* 2. 10. *Ye are compleat in him, who is the head of all principality and power.* This is the *first similitude* for illustration of this mystery, taken from the *head and members of the natural body.*

* *Quemadmodum Christus similitudinem capitis Politici gerit, ita quoscunque in Ecclesiâ externè regit, & non electos solum. Quid minus? Cum & gentium caput etiam sensu isto à Patre Christus constitutus sit,* Psal. 18. 44. *Et Angelorum, qui nedum de Ecclesiâ redempta sint* Col. 2. 10. *imò & singularum personarum, sive de Ecclesia sint vel non sint,* 1 Cor. 11. 3. Parker. de Pol. Eccl.

2. The second great *similitude* which the Spirit of God hath made use of, for the elucidation and setting forth of this Mystery of a Believers oneness with Christ, is taken *from that Union which is betwixt the*

the vine, and the branches graffed into the vine. Or betwixt the root or stock, and the sience inserted into the stock. Believers are trees of righteousness in God's vineyard, but they do not grow upon their own root: The Lord Jesus is the root, whence all their sap is derived. An hypocrite bringeth forth fruit unto himself, and he groweth upon his own root; If he have any adhærance to Christ, it is but external: But now a Saint indeed is graffed into Christ, and there is a coalescency betwixt them into one, *Joh.* 15. 5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.* As if Christ had said, This is the comparison wherewith I may fitly compare my neer relation to you my Disciples, and such as you are.

I have had occasion already to touch upon this similitude, and therefore at present I will but lightly pass over these *four things.*

1. *That the whole dependance of Christians, in every respect, as to the matters appertaining to life and godliness, is upon the Lord Jesus: and they cannot subsist one moment without him.* If they have spiritual life & Saintship, it is from Christ: if they are upheld and maintained in that estate, it is by Christ: and if they have strength and ability to work the works of God, it is imparted through him: For they are branches in him, and he is the vine. So that we have no cause to boast of our selves, nor is there any ground for self-confidence, or trusting in our selves: But the whole life that we live, should be by faith on the Son of God. All our fresh springs are in him. Separate the branches from the vine, and they quickly decay and perish, and are fit for nothing but the fire: so doth the soul of a man or

woman, if separated from Christ, *Rom.* 11. 18. *If thou boastest: thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.* Let this, *saith the Apostle*, keep down the pride of your hearts, do not glory in your selves; for you have nothing from thence. If a man glory, let him glory in the Lord: for all the sap and juice cometh from the root. The branch hath nothing of its own, but what is received from thence. All your support is by vertue of the root; so that walk humbly with God, in the sense of your own emptiness, and utter insufficiency. And if you would live the life of God indeed, have your constant recourse unto the Lord Jesus, and be drawing nourishment from him: *for thou standest by faith*, Rom. 11. 20.

2. The similitude imports, *That the union of a Believer with the Lord Jesus, is a very closly compacted and intimate union*: that they are very firmly, and entirely, knit together. The branch, when it is graffed, becometh thereby incorporated into the vine: so in a spiritual sense, there is a kind of *corporation* of Christ and his people together; and therefore it is represented under the notion of being graffed into him. There is a deep and inward connexion between them: so deep and intimate, that they are called by his Name, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. *As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ*; *i. e.* so is the company of Believers [*Christ mystical*] who are so knit closs unto Christ, as if they were the same; as if they were consolidated into one.

3. From this resemblance we may observe, *That a person cannot possibly be united unto Jesus, till he be taken off from all other dependances whatsoever.* First there

there must be a cutting off the branch from the stock in which it naturally groweth, before it can be graffed into another. First there must be an *abscission*, before there can be an *insition*. A branch may grow neer to the vine, without being cut off from its old root: but it must be wholly cut off, ere it can be graffed into the vine. *Sirs*, By nature we grow in the wild olive tree, we are rooted in the old *Adam*, *sin and self*: for when men are convinced of *sin*, presently they have recourse unto *self*, as a Saviour to deliver them from their sins. But if you would get into Christ, you must be taken off from these: As you have it in the continued metaphor, or allegory, *Rom.* 11. 25. *For if thou wert cut off out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree.* Mark it, first cut off from the one, before capable of being graffed into the other.

4. Learn in the last place from this similitude, *That the glory and excellency of a Christian doth lie in practical holiness*, or *in being fruitful and abundant in the work of the Lord.* You know, The worth and excellency of a branch doth not consist in its beautiful outside, or in the fair leaves and blossoms which it may bear: but in bringing forth much fruit. When there are fair clusters of grapes hanging upon it, this doth content the Husbandman, and prevents the pruning-hooks cutting off such a branch for the fire. So herein is the excellency of a Believer, when he is active for God in his place and calling, and filled with the fruits of righteousness: This is acceptable unto God, and well pleasing in his sight. This commends the root as a juicy, sappy root, when the branches are fruitful, *Joh.* 15.8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear*

much

bear much fruit: so shall ye be my disciples; that is, Hereby it will demonstratively appear, beyond doubt or cavil, that you are my Disciples; then I will own you as such, and never take away my love from you; *q. d.* If you are barren and unfruitful, you will be taken away and burnt: the unprofitable servant shall be cast into outer darkness: But then you will honour me indeed, and be like to enjoy the comfort of your relation towards me, when you express the power of godliness in your conversations. This is the *second resemblance.*

3. The *third similitude* setting forth the relation of a Believer to Christ, is drawn from the *nuptial conjunction which is betwixt the husband and wife.* Christ and his people are joyned together in a conjugal union: He is married unto them, and they are his Spouse whom he hath betrothed unto himself. When a man and woman are joyned in marriage, according to the Institution and Ordinance of God, they become one flesh: so the Lord Christ and true Believers are one Spirit. *Eph.* 5. 31, 32. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joyned to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.* It is as much as if the Apostle had said, If the husband and wife are one, by vertue of their marriage-covenant, or nuptial contract; much more intimately are Christ and his people one, by their spiritual marriage: the other is but a shadow of this Union. Here is a mystery indeed, for of this spiritual union you must understand me: *I speak concerning Christ and the Church*, Cant. 5. 1. *I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse.* And throughout that book of the

Song

Song of Solomon, this union is set forth under that metaphor, as being a marriage-union. Believers are the Spouse of Christ, and so knit to him.

There are *six particulars* especially to be noted, for opening this similitude.

1. When the Lord Jesus and a Believer are knit together into one, *It is according to the will and pleasure of the Father; and a matter very pleasing and acceptable in his sight.* When marriages are regularly made, it is with consent and approbation of parents, on either side: Now God is the parent on both hands, in this spiritual conjunction; and they have his consent to their espousals. 1. He giveth his Son to the Church to be an husband, *Isa.* 49. 6. *I will give thee to be a light unto the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth,* Gal. 4. 4. *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, &c.* Joh. 3. 16. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* 2. Upon the other hand, he taketh the Church to be a Wife or Spouse unto his Son, and giveth Believers unto him, *Joh.* 17. 6. *I have manifested thy name, unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me,* Heb. 2. 13. *Behold I, and the children whom thou hast given me.* So that this is the Father's will, that sinners should come unto Christ, and be united unto him. And *pray* observe it the rather, because there is a proneness in the heart of man to question the *Fathers* good will. Sometimes sinners have good thoughts of Jesus Christ, as one that minds their salvation, and came down from heaven to accomplish it: but they are full of doubts and jealousies touching the *Father*; they question whether he be willing to accept them. *Why, mind it Sirs,* What the Lord Jesus

sus doth is by God *the Fathers* appointment, and approbation. It was he that sent him about his work, and giveth lost sinners into his hands to be saved. This is mentioned as an incouragement to believe in Jesus: for if you do so, *the Father* will receive you graciously, and you shall in no wise be rejected. See the words of our Saviour, *Joh.* 6. 37, 38, 39. *Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out: For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me: And this is the Fathers will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.* This is the first thing to be noted.

2. For the winning over a sinner to become the Lord Christ's, and to surrender up himself into his hands, *He doth first treat with the sinner to that purpose, and doth intreat and persuade him to accept of the grace of the Gospel.* Just, *for all the world,* as it is in order to marriage; first the party is wooed, before the contract is made: so Christ doth woo the soul to become his Spouse, and to accept him for an husband. To this end he imployeth his Ministers to intreat sinners in his name, and sends his Spirit to deal with their hearts, and to propound the match unto them. Such is his gracious condescension towards fallen man, that although the whole benefit of this union redound unto us, yet he is pleased to beseech us to close with him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. *Now then we are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is not only *free grace,* and *abundant grace,* but *preventing grace* also. He first sueth unto sinners, and if for a while they refuse him, yet he waits that he

he may be gracious, *Isa.* 30. 18. As he cometh with salvation, unto the children of men; so he doth seek unto them, and earnestly beseech and intreat them to accept the offers of salvation, *Gen.* 9. 27. *God shall perswade Japhet* (* so the word signifieth) *and he shall dwell in the tents of* Shem. Mark it, The Church of Christ for some ages was well neer confined to the posterity of *Shem*: *Abraham* and his seed came out of the loyns of *Shem*. And by *Japhet* understand the Gentiles who were his offspring: for by them were the Islands of the Gentiles possessed. Now, saith the Spirit of God, the time will come that the Gentiles shall be gathered unto Christ, they shall be brought into the Church. How, or by what means will this be so brought to pass? why Christ will woo them, and treat with them: he will perswade them effectually, and prevail by his perswasions.

* פתה *Allicies, scilicet, ut suo tempore ad cultum Dei & tentoria Shem, i. e. Ecclesiam accedat.* Fux. per Apoc. à פתח Hiph. *pellexit, allexit, &c.* Buxtorf.

3. In pursuance of this comparison *note further*, That our faith in Christ, which is the uniting grace whereby we are joyned to him, and made one with him, is, *The consenting of our hearts to take Christ for our Redeemer, as he doth tender himself to us*: and *the resignation or giving up our selves into his hands*. As in the business of marriage, it is the consent of parties that makes it. The proposal being made, the woman accepteth of such a man to be her Husband, and accordingly giveth up her self unto him in the marriage-covenant, and so they are knit together.

gether. Thus it is in the transactions of marriage between Christ and the Church; we are contracted to him by our consent to be his, and taking him to be our Lord and husband, *Cant. 2. 16. My beloved is mine, and I am his.* Wilt thou have me for thy Husband, and Saviour, upon the terms of the Gospel, *saith Christ by his Spirit unto the sinner?* O Lord, *answereth the sinner*, through grace I will, I give my full consent; and surrender up my self unto thee, and thus they are united. Therefore it is the great complaint of Christ, that he cometh to sinners, and they will not accept him, *Joh. 1. 11. He came unto his own, and his own received him not, Joh. 5. 40. And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.* And it is said of the Christians of *Macedonia*, when they believed in Jesus, *they gave themselves unto the Lord*, 2 Cor. 8. 5.

4. This consent of the heart to be the Lord Christ's, and acceptance of him for our Redeemer, if it be such as uniteth us to him, and maketh us one with him; must be *a marriage-consent and acceptance.* My meaning is, It must be so qualified and circumstantiated, as is required in the consent of persons when they are married together. *That is to say*, It must have these *three properties.*

It must be { 1. *A present* 2. *A full*, and *hearty* } consent and acceptance. { 3. *An entire*, and *indefinite.*

1. It must be *a present acceptance* of Christ, and closure with him: and not only a promise for the future, to take him hereafter, and to submit to him in time to come. For (as *Casuists* and *Civilians* observe) though promises for the future leave an ob-

obligation, upon the parties promising; yet they do not make up a marriag-contract; that must be in words *de præsenti*. So when sinners ingage, hereafter to give up themselves to the Lord Jesus, although it will add to their sin, and condemnation, to live in the neglect of performing such ingagements; yet they are not thereby united unto Christ; but still abide under the wrath of God. If we would be made one with him, we must immediately give up our selves unto him, and take him to be our Lord and Saviour, *Psal.* 16. 1, 2. *Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. O my soul, thou hast said to the Lord, thou art my Lord.* Psal. 116. 16. *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant.* It is not said, I will become thy servant hereafter, when I have a convenient season, and then I will obey thee and put my trust in thee; but *I thy servant, I thy servant*; *q. d.* Here am I ready to set upon any service, I enter my self now into thy service, to abide with thee henceforward even for ever, 1 *Cor.* 7. 22. *He that is called being free, is the servant of Christ.* If he be effectually called, if he answer the invitation of the Gospel, he must ingage without delay in Christ's work: For it is the present time which is the time of acceptance; and the present day which is the day of salvation, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. And the truth is *Sirs*, that bare promises for the future, are so far from uniting us to the Son, that they are nothing else but the sly endeavours of the heart, to put a cheat upon Christ. It is by such hypocritical promises, that when sinners are convinced of the necessity of closing with Christ, they do break through such convictions; and get from under the power of them. When conscience presseth them hard, this is the answer whereby they stop

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the mouth of conscience; *hereafter* they will become obedient to the Gospel. But be not deceived, Christ will not be dallyed with, but all persons shall know that *he searcheth the hearts and the reins*, and is able to see through their dissimulation and hypocrisie, *and he will give to every one according to their works*, Rev. 2. 23.

2. It must be *a full and hearty consent and acceptance*, with the whole soul of a man. It is not a faint wishing and woulding after Christ that will give us an interest in him, but when the whole heart goeth out unto him. * As it is in marriage, A woman may have a *months mind* (as we are wont to express it) to have such a man for her Husband, and yet remain a stranger to him: When they are married indeed, there must be a rejecting all other Suitors, and a full consent to be his: So it is in these spiritual affairs; there may be a slothful velleity and luke-warm inclinations in the spirit of a wicked man towards Christ, he may have an heart for his lusts, and an heart for a Saviour; but this cold and sluggish desire will never make up the match betwixt them. If a man will be knit unto Jesus, he must abandon all things for him, and give him reception with the whole spirit, *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willingnesses in the day of thy power.* * So the word imports; *that is*, they shall so heartily consent to take Christ for their Lord and Husband, as if all the faculties of the soul were turned into will: they shall so fully embrace him, as if there were a concentring together of many wills, to make one violent cur-

* *Quod cor non facit id non fit.*

* עַמְּךָ נְדָבוֹת *Populus tuus erit spontaneitatum*, i. e. *summè spontaneus.*

rent

rent to go forth unto him: as if all the doors of the soul were set wide open for his entertainment. They shall be *willingnesses*; abundantly willing, as if the whole man were nothing but will. See it in the case of *Zacheus*, how heartily he consents to take Christ upon his terms, and salvation by him, *Luk. 19. 6. He made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.*

3. It must be *an unlimited and indefinite acceptance*, without any secret reservations or exceptions. Poor carnal people are apt to deceive themselves in this respect: They will have Christ for their Saviour and Master, but it is alwayes upon some *proviso* or other: that they may keep such a beloved lust, that they may have liberty to fulfil this carnal pleasure, or to live in the practise of the other profitable sin: they will give up themselves to the Lord Jesus, *provided alwayes*, they may comply with the times, and save their estates, and humour such a great man on whom they depend: *provided* they be required to serve him only in the Sunshine of the Gospel, and be not bound to follow him through tribulations. Such *caveats*, and *proviso's* they enter into; but this leaveth them still in subjection to the devil. For that acceptance and consent which uniteth a sinner unto Christ, must be a marriage-consent; when we take him wholly and entirely without any acceptions, to submit to him in all his institutions and commandments, and to cleave to him in all estates and conditions. When we take Christ for our Lord and Husband, *to have and to hold, for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health*, to go with him through fire and water, resolving through grace, that nothing shall divide betwixt us, and that we

will never joyn with any other in confederacy against him. We must come to him as *Paul* upon his conversion, *Act. 9. 6. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? q. d.* Here I am in a readiness and resolvedness for any manner of service: Let me but know thy will, and through divine assistance I will stick at nothing. He doth not say; thus far I could be contented to follow after thee, upon condition I be not put upon difficult service; and that I be not forced to forsake such a lust; or to break off my intimacy, and familiarity, with this or the other sinful companion. No, but here I bring my soul *as a blank paper*, write what terms and conditions thou pleasest, and I am ready to subscribe to them: Do but shew me thy way, and cut out the work which I am to do; and whatever it is, I am resolved to set upon the performance. *This is the fourth thing to be noted*; our consent to take the Lord Christ, must be a marriage-consent; and upon marriage terms, and articles.

5. Note from this comparison in the next place, *That a believers obedience and service, which he tenders unto Christ, throughout the whole course of his life, must be an affectionate obedience*; or *a service mingled with love, and proceeding from love.* We must not serve him as slaves, meerly out of fear, and no further than we are forced by outward respects; or by the clamours of conscience: but as a Spouse is obedient to her husband, and careful to please him, because of her affection towards him. *Matrimonial subjection is a loving subjection*, and such must be ours to the Lord our Saviour. This is to to serve him *evangelically* answerable to the dispensation of the Gospel, which proclaimeth and promulgateth the love of Christ, unto sinners. When

our

our obedience doth spring from a principle of love to Jesus, and is intermingled therewith, and is promoted by the sense of his love to sinners; then it is Gospel-obedience, and new Covenant-service. Not but that the fear of wrath and hell, may have its due place and efficacy, to quicken a Believer unto the works of holiness; but love is the most evangelical motive, most proper and suitable to the dispensation of the Gospel. And therefore the Apostle prayeth in behalf of the *Ephesians*, in order to their more abundant fruitfulness in the wayes of God, & their being filled with all the fulness of God, *that they might be rooted and grounded in love* [that is love towards Christ] *and that they might be able to know the love of Christ* [his love towards them] *which passeth knowledge*; *i. e.* that they might have some clear and competent apprehensions of it, though in its full extent and greatness it can never be comprehended, *Eph.* 3. 17, 18, 19.

6. Lastly note, That this similitude taken from the relation betwixt the husband and wife, besides its holding forth the union of a Believer with Christ, doth import also *that mutual complacency and satisfaction which they take in converse one with the other.* How doth Christ delight in maintaining fellowship with the Saints? And how do their spirits exult in the enjoyment of Christ? See the mutual dearness that is betwixt them, *Cant.* 7. 10, 11, 12. *I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me. Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us lodge in the villages, let us go early to the vineyards, let us see whether the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.* The meaning is this, The heart of the Church was so set upon Christ, that it was

her chiefest delight to be in communion with him; as the wife taketh pleasure in the society of her husband, and he in hers. So much for the *third special resemblance* for illustration of this mystery, drawn from the conjunction which is betwixt the husband and wife.

4. The *fourth and last similitude*, which I shall mention upon this account, is taken *from the union between the foundation, and the building erected thereupon*. They are coupled together, and knit into one, so as to make up one house: So the servants of Christ are knit unto him, being built upon him, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9, 11. *Ye are God's building*. Upon what foundation are they built? See *v.* 11. *Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*. Believers then are as a fabrique erected upon Christ, and cemented unto him.

A little to unfold this resemblance, I will only mind you of *three things*.

1. The holy Ghost doth make mention, in the records of the Scripture, of a *twofold foundation*, with reference to the Church.

{1. *A doctrinal*
{2. *A personal*} foundation.

1. *A doctrinal foundation*, whereupon our faith is to be bottomed, as upon an infallible and unmoveable ground. This foundation is the Scriptures, the doctrines contained in the Bible, the Word of God therein revealed; and in that way made known unto the children of men, *Eph.* 2. 20. *Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*; that is, Upon the doctrines contained in the Old and New Testament, whereof the Prophets and Apostles were the publishers, and the penmen: by whom, as instruments, the mind of God

God was transmitted to succeeding generations. * Our faith *Sirs* is not to be bottomed on the dictates of men, or the traditions of our fathers; for then it would be a fickle; unstable, uncertain faith: But it is to be built on the sure word of Prophecy. The doctrines of the Bible are to be the foundation of it. In this respect, our Lord Jesus Christ is compared to the *chief corner stone*. He is the principal subject whereof the Scripture treats, and whereunto the doctrines tend: they are appointed to discover Christ unto us, and to bring us unto him, and to build us up in him. He is the person in whom the strength of the building lieth, and through whom the two walls of the building are joyned together, *Jews* and *Gentiles* are made up into one house, and Church; as the sides of a building are coupled together by the corner stone.

* *Gubernabit te verbum Dei, & ad portum salutis te adducet spiritus sanctus.*

2. There is a *personal*, or *essential foundation*, upon whom a Believer depends for life and salvation: by whom the Church subsisteth, and through whom it is constituted as a temple for God. Thus Christ is the foundation, and every Saint is a stone in the building founded upon him, *Isa.* 28. 16. *Behold I lay in* Sion *for a foundation, a stone, a tryed stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.* Which the holy Ghost expoundeth, once and again, as meant of Jesus Christ. And it is an excellent passage containing abundant matter of incouragement for humbled sinners, to come unto Christ, and to rest upon him. 1. He is a Saviour of Gods appointment, sufficiently authorized to be the Mediator; so that if you come to God by him, he will not reject

you; for it is the Lord's doing to constitute him to be our Redeemer; it is the way which God himself hath set open to bring sinners to salvation. He is the foundation which the Lord hath laid. *I lay in Sion for a foundation.* 2. For the qualification of his person, he is mighty to save, able to deliver to the uttermost: He is not as sand or gravel, by which the building cannot be supported; but a *stone*, or rock, which noteth the stability and strength of Jesus Christ; he is able to bear whatever weight is laid upon him. No winds, or storms from earth, or hell, can prevail to overturn what is built upon him. And this ariseth from the constitution of his person; being very God, as well as man. 3. *He is a tryed stone.* Do you yet question his sufficiency to save you? Are you still in doubt whether you may trust in him? *Why*, do but mind the experience which he hath given of his ability, he is a tryed stone: *Eve* hath tryed him, and *Enoch* tryed him, and *Noah*, and *Abraham*, and *David*, and *Solomon*, and all the people of God in former ages have made the experiment; and their expectations were not frustrated: they found him such a one as he is discovered to be; He is *a stone of trial*, a foundation of proof, *a sure foundation.* 4. This is that which God would have sinners to take notice of, *Behold* I lay in *Sion* for a foundation a stone, &c. *q. d.* Hear, O people, and give ear all ye inhabitants of the earth, mind what I have done to carry on the salvation of sinners. And to what end is this publication made, but that we might come unto Christ, and unto God by him with full assurance of faith? This is the *first particular* I would observe under this similitude.

2. This resemblance doth import, *That all such per-*

persons whatsoever, who are knit unto Christ, and built up to salvation upon his righteousness, must of necessity be made conformable unto him. There must be an answerableness betwixt them. As the foundation is the supporter of the building, so it is a rule and measure unto the building. The stones which are set upon it must be proportioned thereunto: the superstructure must be of length, and breadth, according to the foundation. So it is in the spiritual building. The souls of Believers, who are joyned to Christ, must bear a proportion to him with whom they are joyned. This is the Statute-Law of the God of heaven, and it is more unalterable, and irrevocable, than the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*, That there is no saving interest in Christ without conformity to him, *Rom.* 8. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.* Mark, It is the unchangable decree of the Lord of Hosts; If you are saved in any other way, or at a cheaper rate, it must be by the alteration of God's decrees; which are unchangeable, as his nature and essence, *without any variableness or shadow of turning.* As Christ could never have been our Redeemer, but he must be made like unto us: so we shall never taste of the Redemption purchased by him, unless he be made like unto him.

This conformity of a Believer to the Lord Jesus Christ, doth mainly lie in five things, *viz.*

1. *The qualifications of his person.*
2. *The sufferings of his death.*
3. *His resurrection, and ascension into heaven.*
4. *The holiness of his conversation.*
5. *The troubles and persecutions, which he underwent upon the earth.*

1. Believers must be made like unto Christ, in the *qualifications of his person.* Their judgments must concenter with Christ's judgment, in the approbation of such things as he approveth, and disapproving those things which he disliketh: Their affections must run in the same chanel wherein Christ's affections run, loving what he loveth, and hating what he hateth, and delighting in that wherein he taketh delight: Their minds must be placed on the same objects on which Christ's mind is placed, and act in the like manner as his acteth: Their hearts must be moulded into the same frame with his heart: and so I might instance throughout the whole man. Christ must be *formed in them, Gal.* 4. 19. And *Phil.* 2. 5. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.* They must be so clothed with his divine qualities, that it may be said they have *put on the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom.* 13. 14.

2. There must be conformity *to the sufferings of his death, in a spiritual sense.* As Christ died for sin, so Believers must die unto sin. As our Lord Jesus was put to a painful, lingring, and ignominious death; in like sort must their corruptions be mortified, and killed. For *Mark it Sirs,* The death and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus, is not only the meritorious cause, through which sin is mortified; and a strong evangelical reason, why it should be mortified; but it is also the pattern and exemplar according to which it is done. In the very same way and manner, as Christ was put to death for us: so are our lusts and corruptions to be crucified within us. Hereby we are rendred *conformable unto his death.* Phil. 3. 9. and *planted together into the likeness of his death,* Rom. 6. 5.

3. There must be conformity to the Lord Jesus,

in his resurrection and ascension into heaven. As he rose again from the dead, and went up into heaven, never to return to corruption any more: so must the hearts of believers be raised unto spiritual objects, and *their affections set upon things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God*, Col. 3.1. Their hearts must be withdrawn from sin, and the world, never to be ingaged upon them any more: but they must live as persons that are revived, and made partakers of a new life, *Rom. 6. 4. As he was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, even so must we also walk in newness of life.*

4. Believers must be made conformable unto Christ, *in the holiness of his conversation.* They must tread in his steps, doing the same work as he did; and acting upon the same principles and motives, as he acted upon; and carrying on the same designs as Christ carried on; and serving the Lord in the like manner, with cheerfulness, delight and alacrity, as he served him, *Eph. 5. 2. Walk in love, as Christ also loved us.* And *Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. We ought not to please our selves, but every one his neighbour, for his good to edification: for Christ also pleased not himself*, &c.

5. They must expect to be made conformable to Christ, *in the troubles and persecutions that befel him upon the earth.* Therefore it is called, *a suffering with him*; that is, the same things, and in like manner as he suffered, *Rom. 8. 17.* If we will be faithful unto Christ, we must look to meet with the like usage as he met with: and to go through many tribulations, into the Kingdom of God.

This is the *second thing* to be noted under this comparison.

3. According to the purport and tenour of this simili-

similitude, taken from the foundation and the building; *Our faith, which is the uniting grace, is a resting upon Christ and his righteousness.* The stones are joyned to the foundation by being laid upon it, and there resting: So when we lay the stress of our salvation upon Christ, and cast our burden upon him, and there stay our selves, as upon a rock; thereby we are united unto Jesus, and made one with him. By nature we are as rough, unpolished stones in a quarry, without any relation to Christ. Now the work of conviction, may be compared to the *unsettling of these stones*; and humiliation and legal terrors upon the heart, are *the hewing of these stones*; By the first they are removed out of the Quarry, and by the other their ruggedness is pared away: The grace of conversion is as the fitting, and *polishing the stones for the building*; and faith is *a putting them upon the foundation*, and their resting upon it. As by the cement of love, the stones are coupled one to another; so by faith they are knit unto the foundation. By the Spirit they are brought unto Christ, and so stay upon him, *Isa.* 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, and walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* Rom. 9. 33. *Behold I lay in* Sion *a stumbling stone, and rock of offence, and whosoever believeth on him, shall not be confounded.* Mark it. As Christ is a foundation to his people, so he is a rock of offence to them that are disobedient; they split themselves against this rock, they stumble and fall and are broken in pieces. If you would be saved by him, you must by faith rest upon this foundation: *For whosoever believeth in him shall not be confounded.* 1 Pet. 2. 4, 5. *To whom coming as unto a living*

living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, &c. See likewise, *Eph.* 2. 21, 22.

This is all that I shall speak under the *sixth general Head*, for the illustration of this Mystery of Union with Christ, by those similitudes which the holy Ghost hath made choice of to this purpose. *That which remains further, is the Application of the Point.*

CHAP. X.

Inferences drawn from the Doctrine of Union with Christ. The excellency and dignity of Believers. The peculiarity of the providence of God towards them. The miserable estate of Christless sinners.

FOr Application or practical improvement of this Doctrine, I will manage it under these *three Heads*. By way of

1. *Information.*
2. *Examination.*
3. *Exhortation.*

1. By way of *Information*. What are the practical Inferences which may be deduced from this Point, of a Believers union with the Son of God, and the necessity thereof? I will not aim at the ingrossing of all, that might be taken in upon this fruitful, and spiritual subject: Only I shall select these *three Inferences*, which naturally arise from what hath been delivered.

1. If

1. If believers are united unto Christ and made one with him in order to their salvation, then hence I gather, *That they are the most honourable, and most excellent persons upon the face of the earth.* Why? Because they are united unto the Son of God: and accordingly they should have the greatest esteem of us, and be most precious and lovely in our eyes. It is the character of a man that shall see the Lord in *Sion*, that he *contemneth a vile person, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord*, Psal. 15. 1, 4. Now here is that which maketh them *right honourable*, above all their fellow-creatures; they are intimately joyned unto Christ. So that the Saints which are in the earth, are the *excellent of the earth*, *Psal.* 16. 3. *more excellent than their neighbours*, than all that dwell round about them, *Prov.* 12. 26. You know, the excellency or worthlessness of any being, is to be measured and judged, by its neerness to, or remoteness from, that which is most excellent.* Now the children of God are neerest the most excellent being; for they are married unto Christ. And this is that which giveth them advancement above the highest Prince, or Monarch in the world; who is a stranger to the power of godliness. Take the greatest Potentate, and he is but the son of a man, but Believers are the children of the Lord of Hosts, the King of kings: *Nay*, They are one with Jesus, * who is *over all God blessed for ever*. Mark how *Solomon* puts the comparison, *Eccl.* 4. 13.

* *Perfectissimum in unoquoque genere est mensura perfectionis cæterorum.*

* *Exulta Populo Dei audiens tua nobilitantis insignia. Tibi enim dictum est* Genus regale & Sacerdotale, populus in acquisitionem. *Ideo quia vos reges estis me, ità rex noster Christus*

Better

Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish King, who will no more be admonished. Here are persons put in competition, that upon an outward account, are at as great a distance as is lighly imaginable. What is a poor man that gets his living from hand to mouth, in comparison with a King, that ruleth over Cities and Countreys, that hath great attendants following him, multitudes of subjects at his beck and command, and millions of gold and silver heaped up in his treasury? If the poor man should come to his gates, he would hardly find entrance: he might dance attendance for many dayes, before he might be admitted to see the King: Possibly he might never get the priviledge, as long as he lived to kiss his hand, and fall down at his feet. *Yea*, but if this poor person be *in his childhood*, which is an age contemptible of itself, and having poverty added to it, is rendred more contemptible: and the King be *an old one*, who hath long sate at the stern, and enjoyed the Soveraignty; and possibly is grown famous by glorious exploits; and hath heaped up treasures as the dust, and settled his throne upon the best security, which the world can afford; that he thinks it can never be moved: you would think such a poor child would not weigh a feather, if laid in the ballance with this mighty Prince, and Emperor. But I tell you *saith Solomon*, if this poor child have saving grace in his heart (for that is true wisdom:) and the King be foolish, if he be a wicked man, an enemy to godliness, a stranger to the life of Religion (for such an one is *Solomons* fool:) the poor child is to be preferred before him: He is a more noble person than the old and foolish

Dominus Rex dictur Regum, & Dominus Dominantium. *Orig. Hom. in Judic.*

King.

King. And here is the reason of it; The poor child is united to Christ, and a friend of God through Christ; whilst that old King is a slave of the devil.

My Brethren, there is utterly a fault amongst the generality of Professors at this day; that they put a value upon men, according to their worldly greatness only; and the poor amongst the godly are despised. As all that are upright in heart are commonly slighted, and trampled upon by the wicked; so the meaner sort of them are not duly regarded, by the people of God themselves. Whereas indeed they are of the number of the most honourable, being neerest to the fountain of honour. So that we ought to have a special respect for the godly, be they never so low in the world: Our delight should be in them, and our great ambition to be amongst them. *David* was a *companion of all them that feared the Lord*, Psal. 119. 63. and all his delight was in the Saints, *Psal.* 16. 3. They are the most excellent persons, deserving our chiefest estimation.

There are *five things*, from whence *for the most part* men are highly esteemed; and as to each of them the Saints have the preheminence.

1. The first and poorest ground of our high esteem of men, is *by their garments, wherewith they are clothed.* S. *James* noted it as a corruption in his time, *Jam.* 2. 2, 3. If a man came with a gold ring, and in goodly apparel, and a poor man in vile raiment; they were apt to have respect to him that was in gay clothing, and to despise the other: And this corruption is hardly rooted out of mens spirits. But in this respect the servants of God have the precedence: they wear the best clothes, of any men in

in the places where they dwell. Is the rich man clothed with purple and scarlet? Well, but *Lazarus* hath on the righteousness of Christ. A wicked man may be adorned with gold and silver, but a Believer hath the ornaments of faith, and patience, and meekness, and temperance, and other excellent graces, which are in the sight of God of great price. All that a wicked man hath on, are but tokens of his shame, and meer rags and patches, which will not cover his nakedness: * God seeth all the rottenness, and filthiness, and putrefaction that is under his gorgeous apparel. But the godly have on the garments of salvation, and are covered with the robes of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her jewels, *Isa.* 61. 10. *Job* was a Prince, and a Magistrate, and it is likely he was arrayed answerably to his place, and dignity: but what was the best suit of apparel in all his Wardrobe, whereof he most glorieth? Mind what he saith, *Job* 29. 14. *I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was a robe and a diadem.* * Here is the daily apparel of the Saints, of more worth than cloth of gold, *Zech.* 3. 3, 4, 5. *Luke* 15. 22. 1 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4.

* *Fulgent mouilibus, moribus sordent: purpurata vestis, conscientia pannosa.* Bern.

Solicitiores de capitis sui decore, quam de salute: Inter pestilentem & spectatum diem perdunt; Concinniores esse malunt quam honestiores, & Remp. minus turbari curant quam comam. Sen.

* *Vestite vos Serico probitatis, byssino sanctitatis, purpurâ pudicitiæ: Tabiter pigmentate Deum habebitis amatorem.* Tert. de cult. mul.

2. Men are commonly esteemed by their *wealth and riches*. He that hath the

the greatest income, shall have most respect, and honour. He shall have cap and knee, as deserving estimation in our account. And if this be the rule, the servants of Christ are the most honourable; for they are the wealthiest men in the world. Hath *Esau* much? yea, but *Jacob* hath all, having an interest in God the giver of all, whose is the earth and the fulness of it,* *Gen.* 33. 9, 11. *Psal.* 24. 1. And *in reversion* believers have a kingdom for their inheritance, *Luk.* 12. 32. A worldling may have bags full of thick clay (for gold and silver are but the purest clay, and pearls and diamonds but the finest coloured earth) yet these bags have a bottom, and will be emptied; But a Believer hath a mine, a treasure without a bottom; like the widows vessel of oyl, that will not be emptied. The best state of a worldling is but in lease for a term of years: Let men boast what they will of having *such, or such* an inheritance for ever, the truth is, the best *Free-holder* in the Land is but tenant for life: death will, *as by a Lease of Ejectment*, thrust him out of his possessions, *Psal.* 49. 16, 17. But a Believers inheritance is for ever, and ever, *Prov.* 8. 18, 19. *Riches and honour are with me* (saith Christ the eternal wisdom of the Father) *yea durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver.* And *v.* 21. *That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures.* All the riches in the earth are but a shadow and fancy; like the apples of *Sodom*, that crumble into ashes between the fingers. They can never fill a mans heart: A person

* יֵשׁ־לִי־רָב *est mihi multum*, said *Esau*. But *Jacob* answered him יֵשׁ־לִי־כֹל *sum: mihi omnia*. Arias Mont.

person may be glutted, and surfeited with worldly profits, and pleasures; but never satisfied. But spiritual blessings are substantial riches, that give satisfaction to the soul, *Rev.* 3. 18.

3. We put a value upon men *according to their imployments and callings*: As a *Physitian* or *Lawyer* is esteemed above others that are in meaner places, and imployed about more servile work, *and the like*. Now the imployment of a Christian is of the highest rank: He is called to be an attendant of an infinite Majesty. He spends his time in converse with the mighty God, and is one of his intimate acquaintance. He driveth a trade for heaven, and in pursuit of a crown, an incorruptible crown: whereas others are busied about the trash and dung of the earth, *Phil.* 3. 20. *For our Citizenship* (for the word imports*) *is in heaven*; i.e. *We* are members of that corporation, and trade in heavenly merchandise; and drive on our designs for the enjoyment of that everlasting Kingdom.

* πολίτευμα.

4. Men are usually prized *according to their endowments, and inward accomplishments of the mind*. As now, If a man have a quick understanding and a strong memory, and abundance of learning; if he be of great parts, and have a deep reach into affairs; such a one is honoured, and admired; and persons of a mean capacity are little set by, in comparison. *Why*, mind it *Sirs*, A truly godly man is the best learned man; He hath the highest accomplishments, and the greatest insight into matters: And no marvel, for he hath been trained up in the School of Christ, and none teacheth like him: He hath had his breeding in the Court of

the great King; he hath knowledge of those mysteries that puzzle the understandings of the greatest *Doctors*, and which the wisest *Philosophers* could never attain unto. The greatest Statesman, and wisest Counsellor upon earth is but a fool, a very dolt, in comparison with the meanest of those that are upright in heart. * For if men reject the word of the Lord, *what wisdom is in them?* as the question is put, Jer. 8.9. All their knowledge is but madness, and that which they boast of as wisdom, is but the shadow of it. They are cunning to pursue a feather, to hunt after a thing of nought, and neglect the substance: and *is this to be wise?* It is the greatest wisdom in the world, to please the Lord; and the highest point of knowledge, to see into matters that concern * our eternal peace, *Prov.* 1.7. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.* So that unregenerate persons are but *Abecedarians*, they have not gotten the first elements of true knowledge, *Psal.* 119. 99, 100. *I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients because I keep thy precepts.* Multitude of dayes should teach wisdom, and such as instruct others should be well skilled: Yea, but *saith David*, I have outstript them all; for I am a servant of God, and have respect to his word.

* *Quanto magis foras es sapiens, tanto magis stultus efficeris. Si in omnibus es prudens, circa te ipsum insipiens.* Bern.

* *Vide miser homo, quia totum est vanitas, totum stultitia, totum dementia, quicquid facis in hoc mundo; præter hoc solum quod propter Deum facis.* Bern.

5. The last ground of honour I shall mention, is men's *high extraction and Parentage*: their great kin-

dred and alliances. Such a person we highly account of, He is Son to an *Earle*, or *Marquess*, or *Duke*; he is neerly allied to personages of worth, *or the like*. But now a Believer is a child of the Almighty, Eternal, and Incomprehensible God; he is of neer alliance to the Lord Jesus, the Mediator. He is closly knit to him, and made one with him: which is the highest pitch of dignity, which a creature is capable of; to be united unto the Creator, the Lord of glory. This is it which a godly man may glory of, and be thereby able to out-boast all his fellow creatures, all other the children of men whosoever, *Psal.* 87. 4, 5, 6. *I will make mention of* Rahab *and* Babylon, *to them that know me: Behold* Philistia *and* Tyre *with* Ethiopia; *this man was born there. And of* Sion *it shall be said, this or that man was born in her, and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people: that this man was born there.* As if the *Psalmist* had said, Men are apt to brag of their high birth, and parentage; they will boast of their Country, and kindred. I am a Citizen of *Babylon (will one say)* a famous City: I, *saith another*, was born in *Tyre*, a renowned place, and have such personages of my kindred: I can reckon my descent from *Rahab*, *saith a third*, a place of eminent remark, and am allied to this, or the other Prince, and Potentate. Well, but a Believer can out-boast them, he can go a step higher. *May he say*, I have God for my Father: I was regenerate, and born in *Sion*, where the great King dwelleth: I am married to the Son of God, and so have a place in his family.* These are the people which God maketh the

* *Distamus sanctam superbiam, & sciamus nos esse illis meliores.* Hier.

greatest reckoning of. When he taketh a view of the world, and the inhabitants thereof, he puts an *asterisk* at the names of such. He writeth them down with a note of remark: Here is a man of royal descent indeed. Here is a person that is of neer alliance to the King of heaven: that is united to Jesus Christ, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords. And mark how in the midst of the *genealogy*, the holy Ghost setteth a note upon *Jabez*, 1 Chron. 4. 10. *And* Jabez *was more honourable than his brethren. And* Jabez *called upon the God of* Israel, *saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed*, &c. *q.d.* Here is a man of renown, we must not pass him by without a *note of memorial* stamped upon him. He hath outstript all the rest of his brethren, for he is acquainted with God, and in communion with him. This is the *first Inference.*

2. If Believers are united to the Son of God, and made one with him, then hence it will follow, *That the people of God may comfortably expect, that God will take a special care of them, and their concernments*: and have a peculiar regard unto them in the exercise of his providence. For they are one with Christ, and God loveth them with the same love (for kind and substance, though not for measure and degree) wherewith he loveth the Lord Jesus: and therefore certainly he will take a special care of them.

When the Lord is pleased, at some times, to appear gloriously in the preservation, or deliverance of his Church and people; it maketh the by-standers amazed, and often filleth the wicked themselves with astonishment. What are these people above others, that God should bear such a gracious respect unto them? You read the very *Heathen*

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could not but take notice of Gods handy-work in this particular, *Psal.* 126. 2. *Then they said amongst the Heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them,* And *Psal.* 48. 5. *They saw it, and so they marvelled.* It was a matter of astonishment in their eyes, that the Lord should be so mindful of them above others. * *Why Sirs,* Here is the reason of it; they are in Christ, & brought nigh unto God through Christ, and no marvel that he hath a principle regard unto such.

* *Viderunt & stuperunt accultam vim Numinis pro Israelitis propugnantem--Et commoti sunt ipsa re.* Sim. de Muss. in loc.

You know, *That* is a common distinction, and it is a very comfortable distinction, whereby the providence of God is branched forth. 1. Into *his general providence* over all creatures: So he feedeth the young ravens when they cry, and provideth meat for the beasts of the field: he disposeth and ordereth whatsoever doth concern any of the work of his hands. 2. *His special providence* towards his own people, he hath a special eye upon them, and respect unto them. As it is with a Magistrate of the City or Countrey, If he be faithful in his place; he hath a regard to the affairs and government of all that are under his jurisdiction: but he hath a more than ordinary regard unto his own family, and houshold. So the Lord is especially mindful of the godly; and here is the ground of it, They are his family, united to his Son, and so his children by vertue of that union. We have this distinction, and the reason of it. *Mat.* 6.26,30. *Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and yet your heavenly father feedeth them: Are not ye much better than they? Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which*

to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Mark it, If he mind other creatures, he will much more regard his people. How doth that appear? *Why*, because they are his children, married to his Son: He is a *Creator* unto others, but he is a *Father* to them. He that feedeth the fowls of the Air (saith Christ) is your heavenly father. And therefore doubt not but he will exercise a peculiar providence over you.

Wherein doth this peculiarity of the providence of God manifest it self towards them? For *answer*, I will take notice of it in *four things*, besides what hath been spoken of the peculiar Covenant-blessings, which are conferred upon such.

1. It doth appear, *in the special cognizance he taketh of their condition, and concernments.* When the Lord looketh down from heaven upon all the inhabitants of the earth, and taketh a view of the transactions in the world; he doth it to this purpose, that he may manage them in a compliance with the welfare of his children, and make them subservient to their good. He maketh an exact enquiry into the state of his Saints, and observeth other things to this very end, that they may be disposed of to their advantage, and benefit. *That* is a precious Text, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro, throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.* He maketh an inspection into all the world, that he may not miss any occasion of doing good to his little flock: but may take all manner of advantages, to shew kindness to them.

2. This peculiarity of providence doth appear,

in the special supports which he ministers unto the spirits of his people, to bear up their hearts, under such pressures, wherewith others are overwhelm'd. For although there is no visible difference alwayes made in the acts of providence towards the righteous, but it happens unto them according to the works of the wicked: Yet there is a remarkable difference to be observed, by a discerning spirit, in the support which is ministred unto their hearts. When the wicked are at their wits end, and filled with terror on every side; then Believers can lift up their heads with confidence, and not be troubled at any amazement. God is graciously pleased, to send them *love-tokens* at every turn; to be a relief unto them, which the world knoweth not of: So that they can sing with joy of heart, under those very dispensations, when the wicked cry for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit, *Isa.* 65. 13, 14. Do but observe their confidence in the midst of troubles, *Psal.* 46. 2. *We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea*; that is, though all things be in commotion, and combust on on every side: Our hearts are settled under the most shaking providences.

3. It doth eminently appear, *in Gods overthrowing all things, that stand in the way of the welfare of his people*, and prove hindrances to the advancement thereof. *Sirs*, The Lord will have no regard to thousands of others, that stand in the way of the good of one of his chosen. He will overturn the thrones of the greatest Emperors, if they are impediments to the good of the meanest of his Saints. So that it is a dangerous thing to resist the proceedings of the most high, when he awaketh to the de-

liverance of them that are upright in heart, *Isa.* 43. 3, 4. *I gave* Egypt *for thy ransom*, Ethiopia and Seba *for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.* * Rather than lose but one of those who are in Christ, he will destroy, and pluck up whole nations before him. *He will strike through kings in the day of his wrath, and wound the heads over many Countreys*, Psal. 110. 5, 6.

* *Hinc generalis doctrina colligenda est. Sic Domino cura esse plos vinces, ut pluris ipsos quam universum orbem faciat. Et nullum fore hominem, quem non tollat atque perimat Dominus, ut suos conservet.* Calv. in loc.

4. The peculiarity of providence doth appear in this, *That many outward enjoyments are given to the ungodly, and they are set on high for Believers sakes.* Not that God hath delight in the wicked, or is a countenancer of their evil wayes: but therefore he doth prosper and advance them, because he intends to use them for the good of his Servants. Either to exercise their faith and patience, and to purge away their dross; or *sometimes* to shelter them from the rage of others. It was for *Jacob's* sake that corn was laid up in *Egypt*, Gen. 45. 7. It was for *Israel's* sake that *Cyrus* was advanced to the Empire, and the treasures of darkness given to him, *Isa.* 45. 3, 4. Your great Statesmen little think of this: Their design is, by the advancement of persons, to make their party strong, or to please a friend, or to carry on their secular interest, one way or other: But God over-ruleth all for his peoples sake: Unto whom he hath a peculiar regard in all things, that are brought to pass under the Sun. And *no marvel*, for they are in Christ, married unto him, and ac-

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accordingly God hath a respect unto them. This is the *second Inference.*

3. The last Inference, which I mainly intended to inlarge upon, is this: If there be an indispensable necessity of Union with the Son, in order to the partaking of life through him, *Then the state of all unconverted sinners whatsoever, before they are knit unto Christ by the spirit of regeneration taking hold on their persons, and working faith in them to take hold on the Lord Jesus; is a dead estate.* For till they are ingrafted into the Son, they can have no life from him. *He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life; i.e.* he is stark dead, utterly dead.

This is one of the expressions, which the holy Ghost hath singled out, to set forth the wretchedness and misery of a person in the state of untregeneracy, before he is brought unto Christ. He is not only defiled with sin, but *dead in sin.* Not only in a condition like that of the man that fell amongst thieves, in his journey from *Jerusalem to Jericho, Luk.* 10. 30. (as some would bear us in hand) who wounded him and left him half dead: But he is quite dead, without any spark of spiritual life remaining in him. By our Apostacy we brought our selves into a dead condition; * and till we are united to Christ, we are unavoidably shut up in that condition. The Son is the fountain of life unto lost sinners, and there is no reception of life from the Son, without having the Son. And therefore the conversion of a sinner is not as the *recovery*

* *Propheta dicit,* Anima quæ peccat ipsa morietur. *Quamvis mortem ejus non ad interitum substantiæ sentiamus: Sed hoc ipsum, quia aliena & extranea sit à Deo qui vera vita est, mors ei esse credenda est.* Orig.

covery of a sick man out of his distemper, but as the *raising of a dead man* out of the grave, *Joh.* 5.24, 25. It is a *passing from death to life*. For as it is v. 25. *The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.* It is meant of a spiritual resurrection, of the first resurrection: and the raising of the body is afterwards produced as an evidence of the mighty power of God, whereby he is able to work this wonderful change upon the soul, v. 28, 29. My brethren, *When a godly man dieth, he shall live*: that is, when his body is dead, his soul shall live in the presence of Christ, and see the face of God in glory; but *an unregenerate person, whilst he liveth, is dead*: that is, whilst he liveth the life of nature, and the life of sense, and the life of reason, he is dead spiritually. And it must needs be so, because he is separated from Christ who is the fountain of life. What is said of the widow that liveth in pleasures, is true of every impenitent sinner, *He is dead, whilst he liveth*, 1 Tim. 5. 6.

How, or in what respect (*you will say*) are unconverted sinners dead? *I answer*, In a *fivefold* respect, *viz.*

In respect of
1. *Abomination in the sight of God.*
2. *The putrefaction and rottenness of that condition.*
3. *Utter impotency, and inability to what is spiritually good.*
4. *Damnation, or liableness to eternal death.*
5. *The abundant evils incident to, or the perfect wretchedness of, that condition.*

1. The

1. The state of all Christless unconverted sinners is a state of death, *in point of loathsomness and abomination in the sight of God.* You know that dead carkasses are loathsom unto the living: though a person hath been never so neer and dear to us, yet when they are dead we cannot endure their presence. *Let me bury my dead*, saith *Abraham, out of my sight.* Thus the unregenerate are dead: God loaths and abhorreth them, and all that is done by them. They are as smoak in his nostrils, as dead stinking carrion in his sight, *Prov.* 3. 32. *For the froward is an abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous.*

By the *froward*, understand the wicked of all sorts; for they are opposed to the righteous: And indeed every ungodly man is perverse and froward in his wayes: He riseth up against the light of his own conscience, and resisteth the workings of the Spirit, and is ready to rebel against the plain counsels of the word. He is a *prating fool* (as he is elswhere called) his heart is finding fault with this command, and cavilling at the other duty: in all things he walketh cross to God and holiness, and delighteth in crooked paths. Let the Lord say what he will, he hath some objections against it, and is resolved to hold on his own course: and therefore is justly called *froward.* And what is the condition of such? why, they are an abomination to the Lord. I pray think of this, you that live in any way of sin; you that harbour any secret lust in your bosoms, and hide it as a sweet morsel under your tongues, and thereby evidence that you are not in Christ. Remember, *I say*, though you may be rich and great, and men may flatter you: yet God abhorreth, and detesteth you. You may have

high

high conceits of your selves, but you are a burden to the Spirit of the living God: and if you go on in those wayes, he will quickly ease himself of you. *For he hateth all the workers of iniquity*, Psal. 5. 5. O *Sirs*, How should men hasten their escape out of this sad estate? and adore the patience that hath hitherto spared them? and the infinite goodness of that God, who still waiteth that he may shew mercy unto them? Certainly it is wonderful long-suffering, and powerful patience, whereby the wrath of God is restrained, from taking vengeance upon such, *Numb.* 14. *v.* 17, 18.

2. Persons unregenerate and out of Christ are dead, *in respect of the putrefaction and rottenness of their condition.* A dead carkass, the longer it lieth, the more it putrefies, and is corrupted: so it is with impenitent sinners, The longer they lye in their unconverted estate, the worse they grow; the more their spirits are setled in hatred against God, and the greater is their forwardness and proneness to all sorts of abominations. And therefore none are so hard to be wrought upon as old sinners; that have spent the most part of their time in the service of the devil, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. *Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse.* For custom in sin doth naturally tend to strengthen the habits of sin. * As it is in any secular trade or imployment, the more time a man spendeth in his Trade, the more skill he getteth, and the more handy he is at his work, till he come to perfection in such an Art or Mystery: So the more time a sinner spendeth upon his lusts, the more cursed skill and wisdom he getteth, to make pro-

* *Suffocat hominem, à veritate avertit, abducit à vita, est laqueus, est barathrum, est malum ventilabrum mala consuetudo.*

provision for the flesh, and to find out wayes to satisfie his lusts, and evasions to break through convictions upon his conscience: the more handy he groweth to commit any sort of wickedness; so that in process of time he will turn a deaf ear unto counsel. * You read of sinners compared to *wild asses used to the wilderness, And who can turn them away?* saith the holy ghost, *Jer.* 2. 24. *q. d.* They are grown obstinate in their rebellions; formerly, perhaps, a reproof would have taken with them, but now you had as good speak to a stock or a stone. Continuance in sin taketh away the conscience of sin. Formerly some workings of a natural conscience might put a stop to mens running to all excess of riot: but when the bridle is broken, whither will not a wicked man run? So that my brethren, it is a point of wisdom to seek unto God betimes: and for persons that are in their youth, to remember their Creator in the morning of their lives. We are apt to cozen our selves by promises to repent hereafter; when I have a convenient season (*saith the sinner*) I will make my peace with God; and when I am in a better temper. Nay, but, *O vain man*, * now is the most convenient season: For besides the slipperiness and uncertainty of a mans dayes upon earth; the longer thou liest in a course of sin, the harder thine heart will grow, and the faster hold will the devil get of thy soul. So that *deliver thy self as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the snare of the fowler: Give not*

* *Ex voluntate perversâ facta est consuetudo, & dum consuetudini non resistitur facta est necessitas.* Aug. conf.

* *Qui promittit poenitentiam remissionem, non promittit peccanti poenitentiam.*

sleep

sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids, Prov. 6. 4, 5.

3. Persons out of Christ are in a dead condition, *in respect of their impotency, and inability to that which is spiritually good*. A dead person hath no power to perform the works of nature, as eating, and drinking, and walking, and discoursing, and the like; because he is dead. Thus impenitent sinners are without strength unto the things of God, *Rom.* 5. 6. A sincere Christian is *dead to sin*: and the unconverted *are dead in sin*; they have no power of themselves to the works of holiness and righteousness. In this sense I principally understand that place *Eph.* 2. 5. *Even when we were dead in sins and trespasses, he hath quickned us*; that is, When all our spiritual abilities were gone; If we had been left to our selves, we should never have recovered out of our bondage and slavery, but must have lain in it eternally, without hopes of being delivered; and then God came and breathed the Spirit of life into us. And *Sirs*, this should awaken us to cry mightily unto the Lord, and never to give him rest till he steppeth in for our recovery. This should cause us to take diligent heed, that we quench not the motions of the Spirit, nor provoke him to withdraw his workings from us: for if he wholly depart, we are undone irremediably. I might under this head descend unto particulars, by shewing you. 1. That unconverted sinners have no power *to turn their souls unto God*, nor to make a saving change upon their own spirits, but this I have touched upon before. 2. That they are without power *to walk in the ways of holiness*, or to perform one good action in an acceptable manner. When the Lord himself took a view of all mankind in their apostatized condi-

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tion, he found *not one that did good, no not one*, Psal. 14. 2, 3. And 3. That they are without strength *to resist the temptations of the devil*; further than they are kept in by the restraining grace of God. Satan leadeth them captive *at he will*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. As the heart of man is tainted with the principles of the most horrid abominations, that ever were forbidden in the Scriptures; so if God did not set bounds to the lusts that are within us, we should quickly rush into the practise of them. *Sirs*, were it not for the restraining grace of the Almighty, you would have been murderers as *Cain*, and guilty of witchcraft as *Manasses*, and have been as gross Idolaters as any of the *Heathen*. Nay, you would have sinned your selves before this time into hell, or without the compass of the promise of mercy and forgiveness. Surely this is not a condition, wherein a person should quietly rest one moment: for if God should pluck up the flood-gates, whither would not the violent torrent of a mans corruptions carry him? *Deut.* 18. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. I might have shewed you, 4. That the unregenerate are so far from having any power by nature to turn themselves unto God, or to serve him in truth and sincerity; *that their hearts are filled with enmity and hatred against God, and his wayes*; and ready to fight against the means appointed to draw them heavenward. Nay, the *carnal mind is enmity* it self, so it is expressed *in the abstract*, *Rom.* 8. 7. As if they were made up of nothing but venom, and poyson, and wrath, and bitterness against God. *But I must not dwell upon these things.* The Lord press them upon your hearts, and awaken you to follow hard after him, and to take fast hold of him, and never to let him go, till he hath given you clear evidence of

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your freedom from this sad condition. The Lord make you restless in your spirits, till you have secured your deliverance.

4. An unregenerate sinner must needs be in a state of death (because out of Christ, who is the fountain of life) and that *in respect of condemnation, or liableness to eternal death.* As we say of a malefactor, when verdict is brought in against him, and sentence is passed upon him to be executed, *He is a dead man*, dead in law; and assoon as a *writ* for execution cometh forth to the *Sheriff*, he will be actually put to death. In this sense every unconverted sinner is dead, legally dead, *that is*, He's condemned to be sent into everlasting burnings. So that, as the *Egyptians* said of themselves when their first-born were slain, *We be all dead men*, Exod. 12. 23. The like sad message may I bring to every impenitent person amongst you, *Thou art a dead man, or woman.* Verdict is past upon thee as guilty, and sentence is gone forth against thee, to be sent into the chains of darkness: only thou art *reprieved* for a few moments, and hitherto there hath been a *respite of execution.* But let me tell thee, if God should send a providence to take thee hence in this condition (as for ought thou knowest, he may do this night) thou wouldest as certainly drop into hell, and there lye for ever, as now thou art upon the land of the living. See a full proof of it, Joh. 3. 18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already.* Mark it, although he be not actually damned, yet he is already condemned; and if he go on in his way, it is impossible he should escape the damnation of hell. How is he condemned already? *why*, the Law of God hath pronounced sentence against him, to be cast into prison, till he have paid the utermost

rermost farthing; which will never be paid. The sinner hath wronged, and rebelled against an *infinite Being*, and the Law doth sentence him to make a proportionable satisfaction. Now seeing he cannot render a satisfaction *infinite in worth and valuation*, he is condemned to torments *infinite in duration*. This is the sentence passed upon the wicked, and by reason of their unbelief this sentence stands unrepealed: It remaineth in its full force and vigour against them; they cannot plead the Gospel pardon for their discharge: because that pardon is procured through the blood of Christ, and given forth to none but such as are united to him. If men were duly sensible hereof, how would it disturb their carnal peace, and cause their hearts to tremble? They would not enjoy a quiet hour, till they had made sure their acquital from this dreadful sentence: They would not eat in quiet, lest the next bit of bread they swallow down, should stop their breath, and prove as God's executioner to drag them into prison: They could not sleep in quiet, lest before the light of the morning, their souls should be required, and sent into the bottomless pit of destruction. If this point were believed, and laid to heart, *surely* it would fill many closets and families full of complaints and cryings out, more than if they were under the sorest temporal scourge. How would mens retired chambers be filled with prayer, and earnest desires after God, to pluck them as fire-brands out of the burning? What pains would they take, to sue out their pardon in the blood of Christ? What welcom entertainment would they give unto the Son of God, when he cometh to offer life and salvation to them? *Exod.* 12. 30. *There was a great cry in the*

land of Egypt, *for there was not an house where there was not one dead.* O my brethren, If this doctrine were throughly weighed, what a great cry would be heard in many places and Parishes; where perhaps there are few houses, wherein there are not several persons dead; sentenced to be sent into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death? How would mens bowels earn with pity towards their carnal relations, who spend their dayes in rejoycings, and are every moment in danger of dropping into hell? What mad men should we reckon ungodly persons to be, that go on in mirth and jollity, or spend their time in heaping up the dross and rubbish of the earth, when in the mean time they are persons dead in Law, condemned to hell? How many do hardly think a serious thought of eternity, from one end of the week to the other, when yet there is but a step between them and everlasting burnings? But if this were considered, how would they run from one Minister to another, and from one Christian to another; with that question, *What must I do to be saved?* I am a condemned person, can you give me directions how to get the sentence repealed? *The Lord cause these things to sink deep into your hearts.*

And a little to drive home this nail of doctrine, I will mind you further of these *two things.*

1. As Christless sinners are already condemned, so *the very glory of God is concerned in their damnation,* or in the execution of the sentence past upon them, if they abide in that condition. And that is a matter very dear unto him, whereof he is exceeding tender, and wherewith he will never part, *Isa.* 42. 8. God made all creatures for his own glory, and

and he will have it from them, *one way, or other*. If you do not glorifie his free grace, by closing with Christ, and submitting unto him; he will glorifie his justice, and severity upon you, in your everlasting banishment out of the presence of Christ. It is observeable, what is said in the case of *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, when they offered up strange fire which God commanded not, and they were consumed in a dreadful manner with fire from heaven, *Lev.* 10. 3. *Then* Moses *said unto* Aaron, *this is that the Lord said; I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.* It is as much as if he had said, This I am resolved upon, that I will have glory from you *one way or other*. If you do not honour me by a due observance of my word, I will vindicate mine honour upon you by pouring down the vials of mine indignation. So may I say in this case, If you do not glorifie God actively in your conversations, he will be glorified upon you in your confusion: for this is that which he hath determined to have, one way or other. If you do not give glory to God, by submitting to the terms on which salvation is offered; you must of necessity be cast into outer darkness: and God will glorifie his righteousness, and truth, and power, and holiness, in your utter destruction; for by one means or other he will be glorified, *Rom.* 9. 22, 23.

2. As impenitent sinners are dead in Law, sentenced to hell, and eternal death; so if they go on still in their sins, *the infinite mercy of God will never save them, from that sore ruine and desolation.* This is the constant refuge, unto which they have recourse: *Be it*, that the Law condemneth them, yet God is gracious, and merciful, and full of compassion, and therefore they hope he will spare them notwith-

ſtanding. Nay, but *O vain man*! If thine heart ſtill goeth after thy deteſtable things, the God of incomprehenſible mercy will not ſhew thee one drop of mercy: He that is unſpeakable in his compaſſions, will not have one dram of pity, or compaſſion upon thy ſoul. It is true, *He is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.* 2 Chron. 30.9. But *God ſhall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch a one as goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes*, Pſal. 68.21. *The mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting unto everlaſting upon them that fear him, and unto ſuch as keep his Covenant.* Pſal. 103. 17, 18. But *he will not be merciful to any wicked tranſgreſſor.* Pſal. 59. 5. Why *Sirs*, do not you know that he is a God abundant in truth, as well as rich in mercy? And he will ſhew no mercy to ſinners in a way derogating from his truth, *Exod.* 34. 6. It is he that hath ſaid, *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God*, Pſal. 9. 17. and the Word of the Lord will certainly have its accompliſhment. When thou preſumeſt of mercy, Remember withal, that he is a God of truth; and as ſure as God is true, if thou goeſt on in ſin, and remaineſt ununited unto Chriſt, thou wilt periſh for ever, notwithſtanding that God is merciful: For *all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto ſuch as keep his covenant and his teſtimonies*, Pſal. 25.10. Alas poor deluded wretch, doſt thou hope for mercy to keep thee from hell, whilſt thou art in a courſe of ungodlineſs? *Why man*, The mercy of God will come up in judgment againſt thee, and ſink thee deeper into hell: * for by deſpiſing

* *Quos diu ut convertantur tolerat, non converſos durius damnat.* Hier.
Tarditatem vindicta compenſat gravitate ſupplicii.

sing the goodness of God, thou art treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, *Rom* 2. 4, 5. Dost thou presume of mercy in thy state of impenitence? *Why man*, This very presumption will add load upon thy back, and degrees unto thy torments. Read over that Text deliberately, and the Lord awaken thy conscience in the perusal of it, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20, 21. *And it come to pass, that when he heareth the words of this curse, he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst.* It is to this effect, *as if the carnal wretch had said*, God is gracious and merciful, and though I have no interest in Christ, but take my pleasure in sin, and am not so forward in godliness as these precise Ministers would perswade me; yet I trust in God that he will shew pity upon me, he will not be so severe as these hot-spirited men would bear us in hand: God is a God of mercy, and delighteth in it, and I hope to taste of his compassion, and that he will not send me to hell, whatever he hath said. Well, *But will such a person find mercy, because he hopeth for it?* Will he meet with peace, because he saith in his heart, He shall have peace? *Nothing less*; This very presumption of mercy whilst in his sins, will be a means to bar and bolt the door of mercy against him.

*For mark what followeth, v. 20, 21. *The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousie shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lye upon him: and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of* Israel, *according*

* *Quo divius expectat, to districtius judicabit.*

cording to all the curses of the Covenant, that are written in this book of the Law, &c.

This is the *fourth respect*, in which a Christless estate is a state of death, *viz. In point of condemnation, or obnoxiousness to eternal death.*

5. Lastly, Unconverted sinners are in a state of death *in respect of the abundant evils incident to that condition.* They are in a perfectly wretched and miserable estate: For death comprizeth all sorts of evils. As when life is promised to the godly, it is a comprehensive term, that containeth all sorts of blessings and mercies whatsoever, *Psal.* 30. 5. *Prov.* 3. 18. So when the wicked, on the other hand, are said to be dead, *that* is a big-bellyed word, that carrieth all kinds of evils in the bowels of it: troubles, and vexations, and perplexities here; and at last eternal ruine, and desolation, *Deut.* 30. 15, 19. Now in this sense, they are all dead who are not in Christ. *Destruction and misery is in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known*, Rom. 3. 16, 17. To work this upon your hearts, study seriously *these three Texts of Scripture*, Job 15. from *v.* 20. to the 30. *Job* 18. from *v.* 5. to the 21. *Job* 20. from *v.* 5. to the end of the Chapter. And withal observe *these four subsequent notes.* 1. *Christless persons are under the guilt of all the sins and transgressions, that ever were committed by them since they had a being*: And God will one day reckon them up in order, and lay them in full load upon their shoulders. Possibly sinners themselves have forgotten multitudes of them; but the God of infinite knowledge hath written them down exactly in his book; and at length he will bring them forth into judgment. And *truly Sirs*, One would think there needed no more to make them miserable enough.

One

One sin, if laid to our charge, would sink us irrecoverably into perdition. Alas, How will the sinner stand, when all his iniquities shall meet together, and be sealed up as in a bag, and bound fast upon him? If a wicked man should sit down, and make a catalogue of the sins of one month or week, what a vast heap would they amount to? Vain thoughts, proud, and earthly, and unbelieving thoughts; inordinate passions and affections; unsavoury and rotten communication, evil actions done, and duties left undone, and slightness and superficialness in the discharge of duty, *and the like*. Yea, but when all the sins of his whole life, and the native pravity and wickedness of his heart, shall be gathered together into one bundle; what a numberless number would they amount to? What unconceivable torments would be the wages of them, if considered as clothed with all the aggravating circumstances thereof? Why *Sirs*, when God enters into judgment with the unregenerate, he will not abate them one sin. *Psal.* 10. 15. *Break thou the arm of the wicked, and the evil man: Seek out his wickedness, till thou find none.* That is, set them down in order, till they are all set down: Let not one of them remain untaken-notice of: Let them be searched out so exactly, till there be no more to be found. We are apt to think, that God will not be so strict, as some would press us to believe: But if you are wicked sinners, he will not abate you one transgression. The very sins of thy youth, which are slipt out of thy memory, God will fill thy bones with them, and make them lie down with thee in the dust, *Job* 20. 11. And as for thy secret sins, which the world could not ob-

serve, he will bring them to light, and set them in order before thine eyes, *Eccl.* 12. 14. *Psal.* 50. 21.

2. Persons out of Christ are in a wretched condition, *because they have God for their adversary*: who is the mighty possessor of heaven and earth; in whose hands are all the corners of the world, and at whose command and beck is every creature in being, to fulfil his pleasure; Against whom never did person rise up and prosper; *For he is wise in heart, and mighty in strength*, Job. 9. 4. This all-powerful God is their enemy, that setteth against them: the living and eternal God, who is able to pursue them that oppose him, with fiery indignation for ever: Into whose hands therefore it is a *fearful thing to fall*, *Heb.* 10 31. *Job* 9. 4. My brethren, a few right and serious apprehensions of the nature and attributes of God, would make a man heart shiver, and tremble, at the very thoughts of having him for an adversary. For as *Moses* saith, *Who knoweth the power of his anger? Psal.* 90. 11. No secure sinner knoweth it: for if they did, it would rouse them out of their security, and cause them to flie for refuge unto the city of refuge, * No unregenerate person knoweth it. Had they but a glimpse of the discovery of it, their ears would tingle at the mention of his being against them: It would be a vexation by day and by night, only to understand the report of God's being their enemy; who in a moment can break them in pieces like a potters vessel. *Who knoweth the power of his anger?* The meaning is, It is unsearchably dreadful, and past finding out. So that this alone

* *Omnis peccans est ignorans.*

alone were sufficient to bespeak them throughly miserable. For may a man say to the unregenerate, as the King did to the woman that cried unto him for help, 2 *King.* 6. 27. *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?* If God do not comfort thee, what enjoyments can do it? for they are all at his disposal, and can minister no further assistance than he is pleased to put into them. If the Lord of Hosts be set against thee, who can deliver out of his hands?

3. *Unconverted sinners are under a curse in all that doth concern them.* And how can they expect to succeed in any of their affairs, when there is a curse from heaven intermingled therewith? This is the condition of every person out of Christ, to be an accursed person. And that curse is of an extensive nature; It rideth a large circuit; it spreadeth it self upon, and insinuateth it self into every mercy which they receive, and every work they perform, and every place and relation they are in, and every providence they are under, *Prov.* 3. 3. *The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked.* But what if he go out of his house, may he not escape it? No, The curse will follow him whithersoever he goeth, and suck out the sweetness of whatsoever he doth possess, *Deut.* 28. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. *It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the City, and cursed shalt thou be in the field, cursed shall be thy basket and thy store; cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed*

shalt

shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, and vexation, and rebuke in all that thou settest thine hand unto, for to do; until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly: because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. Mark how the curse pursueth the ungodly; and although he stave it off with all his strength and skill, yet it will *come upon him*: And if he flee from it, it will *follow after him*: And if he run never so fast it will *overtake and seize upon him*, and all that he hath: and will never be removed till he leave his sins, and get into Christ, or else be made eternally accursed. This is the *third particular* to set forth the misery of a Christless condition, *It is an accursed condition.* And it must needs be so, for Christ alone can deliver us from the curse of the Law: and you can have no redemption through Christ, except you are ingraffed into him.

4. Persons unconverted and ununited to Christ, must of necessity be in a perfectly wretched condition, *because all the comminations and threatnings in God's word, belong unto them, and hang over their heads*; and unless prevented, by a speedy return unto God, will actually fall down upon them. As a Believer cannot but be blessed, because he hath a right to all the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel: so an unregenerate person cannot but be miserable, because all the dreadful and direful threatnings of the word are his share and portion. And this in very deed is the reason, why sinners for the most part cannot endure to be conversant in the word; and it is a trouble and vexation unto them, when passages of the Scripture are darted into their Spirits: Because (as *Ahab* said of *Micaiah*) it never prophecieth good concerning them; it denounceth

nounceth nothing but wrath against them. All that is written in the Law is set against them: and if there be not enough written, God will bring upon them more evils than are expresly mentioned in the threatnings of the Law. Their inward thought is, that God will not deal so severely with them, as is contained in the word. But *mind it Sirs*, if you continue in sin, he will fulfil his word with advantage: He will bring upon such, all the plagues that are written; *Also every sickness and every plague that is not written in the book of the Law, them will the Lord bring* upon such persons till they be destroyed, *Deut.* 28. 61.

So much for the *third Inference*, That persons out of Christ must of necessity be dead: for *he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.*

There is one main *objection* should have been answered under this head, which relateth especially to the *third way* of their being dead, *viz. in respect of impotency, and inability to that which is spiritually good.* I will briefly touch upon it in this place, though it cometh in, a little out of order, and should have been handled under that *third particular.*

Obj. *The objection is this*, It unregenerate persons are thus dead in sins, and have no power to that which is spiritually good; either to turn themselves unto the Lord, or to walk in wayes of holiness before the Lord: To what purpose then doth he so frequently command them to turn unto him, and to make their wayes perfect before him, and to cleanse their hearts from wickedness; if they have no power to do what is commanded? Such injunctions you have often upon record in the Scriptures, *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Turn ye, turn ye from your*

evil

evil wayes; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Jer. 4. 14. *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved.* And *Isa.* 1. 16. *Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes.* To what end, *now will you say*, are these injunctions laid upon the unconverted, if they are stark dead in their sins, and have no strength to do what is injoyned?

Sol. *I answer*, These commandments do not import any spiritual strength in the wicked, *for they are dead:* They have lost the image of God which was the life of the soul. For *as the soul is the life of the body, so the image of God was the life of the soul*; and this image they put away from them, by their apostacy. But these commandments have their usefulness many wayes: principally upon a *fivefold account.*

1. God doth command the unregenerate to walk in his wayes, and that in truth and with a perfect heart; not as importing their strength what they are able to do; *But to shew them their duty what they ought to do.* * And it is no such strange thing, as some persons would persuade us, that a man should be in duty bound to the performance of more, than in his fallen estate he is able to perform. A little to illustrate it by a *familiar instance* or two. Take a servant, that by his licentiousness hath made himself drunken, and it is still his duty to serve his Master; although he hath put himself into a present incapacity for the discharge of that duty: *His sin and wickedness doth not disannul or cancel*

* *Non mensura nostrarum virium sunt praecepta Dei, nec vires nostra mensura praeceptorum divinorum. Nec attemperat Deus mandata sua ad vires hominis peccato corrupti, sed ad debitum naturale.* Wendelin. System. majus.

cel his masters right and authority. If I lend a sum of money to another, and he through negligence and ill husbandry squandereth it away, and is not able to pay me: yet I may justly and legally call upon him for payment, to manifest unto him what he is bound to do. *This is the very case*; God gave us power at first to obey his will, and to keep all his statutes, and to walk in obedience before him, and we wilfully put it away from us, *Eccles.* 7. 29. *God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.* Now mans wickedness and sinful declension from God, doth not invalidate God's authority over us, nor enervate the obligation of his Law upon us. He may justly come and require the debt of obedience at our hands, though we have made our selves unable to tender it. As it is in the parable, *Mat.* 25. 27. *Oughtest thou not to have put my money to the exchangers.* * So this is the work which we *ought* to do, though by our apostacy we are deprived of ability to do it.

* Industriam tuam servus debebas domino. *Marl.*

2. God doth lay these injunctions and precepts upon the unconverted, not as implying any power in them; *but to make them sensible of their own weakness.* As sometimes when children will boast of what is above their strength, we set them upon the work, that they may see their folly, and how unable they are to do what they boasted of. Why *Sirs*, the heart of man is very deceitful, and apt to boast of great matters. Most men think it is an easie thing to repent and believe; and that they can turn unto God at any time. Why, let me see you do it, saith

* *Ad hoc lex data est ut superbo suam infirmitatem notam faceret.* Aug.

saith the Lord. * He setteth them upon the performance, that he may cause them to see and acknowledge their own insufficiency. As Christ dealt with the young man that was full of self, *Mat.* 19. 20, 21. He thought he was able to keep all the commandments of God, and to climbe to heaven by that ladder. And what saith our Saviour to him? Why, *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.* As if he had said, Thou thinkest thy self able to do whatsoever is commanded; I will trie thy strength, Here is a commandment I give, *go and do it*: and then it quickly appeareth how impotent and unable he was. In this respect all the commandments of the Law are to the unregenerate [*præcepta probationis*] precepts for trial. As it was with the *Israelites*; they supposed they could have kept all that God had spoken; and he giveth them his precepts in their full extent and latitude, and leadeth them through the wilderness, *to humble them, and to prove them, and to know what was in their hearts*, Deut. 8. 1, 2. That is, to make them to know what was in their hearts: for he knew it well enough; all things are naked and open before him; But they could not believe it, that they had such a proneness to evil, and such an aversness and impotency to that which is good. But by putting them to the trial, God maketh them to know it.

3. God is pleased to lay his commands upon the unregenerate, to turn unto him, and to believe in Christ, and the like; *That they might be stirred up to addresse themselves unto the Lord, to work in them*

what he requireth to be within them; and to inable them to do, what is commanded to be done.* That out of every precept they might frame a petition for strength and spiritual grace, and present it unto the Majesty of heaven, *Psal.* 119. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my wayes were directed to keep thy Statutes!* So should a sinner say, Thou Lord commandest me to convert and turn; *O that my soul were converted, that I might turn unto the most high!* Thou commandest me to repent; *O Lord give me repentance, not to be repented of!* Thou requirest me to be holy; *O make me such a one as I am required to be!* * And therefore it is observable that what is commanded in one place, the Lord himself in some other place hath undertaken to perform; that we might be quickned to seek unto him for it. In *Jer.* 4. 4. you have it as a precept. *Circumcise your selves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts.* But in *Deut.* 30. 6. it is a word of promise: *And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.* Ezek. 18. 31. God hath laid it as a commandment upon us, *Make you a new heart, and a new spirit.* But *Ezek.* 36. 26. The Lord himself hath undertaken it for us. *A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you.*

* *Precepta Dei sunt petitionum nostrarum materia; quæ jubet Deus facere quæ non possumus, ut sciamus quid petere ab ipso debeamus.* Wendel. Syst. maju.

* *Lex data est, ut gratia quæreretur; gratia data est ut lex impleretur.* Aug.

4. God doth command the unconverted to turn them-

themselves, though they are dead in sins and trespasses: *because he doth employ his word of precept as the means, whereby effectually to turn them.* Together with his commandment, *To cleanse themselves*, he doth send forth his Spirit to make them clean. * It is just for all the world, in this case, as in Christ's calling upon *Lazarus*, Joh. 11. 43. *He cried with a loud voice*, Lazarus *come forth.* This did not import any power in *Lazarus*, to raise up himself; for he had been four dayes dead: But together with the word of Christ, there went forth a secret energy and vertue from him, whereby he was raised. So when Christ's call goeth forth unto the wicked, to turn and repent; it doth not suppose any power in them: but together with his word, he sends forth the efficacious operation of his Spirit, whereby they are turned, and repentance is wrought within them. And this is according to one of the Statute-Laws of the great God of heaven, *that his Word and Spirit shall go forth together.* The holy Ghost worketh in the word, and by the word. The commandment is the [*vehiculum* or] conduit-pipe by which the Spirit is conveyed, to plant grace in mens hearts, *Isa.* 59. 21. *Prov.* 1. 23. *Jam.* 1. 18. And this should incourage the unconverted to be much in reading the word, and in meditation upon the word, and to give their constant attendance upon it when it is preached, and to be often pressing it upon their hearts, and personally applying it to their own cases and consciences.

* *Utitur Deus praeceptis ut corda nostra ad obsequium trahat. Sic mortuos quoque non frustra Deus alloquitur, quando per ipsum illud alloquium vitam mortuis infundit; & quod efficere vult declarat.* Wendel.

5. *I*

5. *I might shew you*, That although it is God alone by his Almighty power, who is able to convert a sinner unto himself; yet he is pleased to lay his commands upon them, and to reason and expostulate the case with them; *that so they may be wrought upon in a rational way*: For God doth not work upon men, as upon stocks and stones; but dealeth with them as creatures indued with reason, and understanding. He draweth them *powerfully* to Christ: yet he doth it *sweetly*, without offering violence to the will of man. And therefore he maketh use of commandments to press them thereunto, and of arguments and spiritual reasonings to inforce those commandments; and so doth overcome their stubbornness, by making those means to prevail, *Joh. 6. 44, 45. No man can come unto me, except the father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.* Mark it, The Lord draweth men by teaching them, and making those teachings efficacious. He acteth with a strong hand and an outstretched arm but that arm conquereth them in a way of instruction.

And thus I have done with the first Use, viz. that of Information.

X CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The Use of Trial. Self-examination the way to attain the knowledge of our Union with Christ. Wherein the work of Self-examination consisteth. Motives to quicken thereunto, Directions for the right managing of that work.

2. THe principal use I drive at for the improvement of this point, is by way of *examination and Trial.* If union with Christ, or having the Son, be of such absolute necessity in order to salvation by him; Then it concerneth us to take this doctrine home to our selves, and to enter upon a serious debate with, and examination of our selves; *whether we be in Christ: whether we have the Son, by being united unto him.* Else we have no right to eternal life, but are still in our sins, and under the wrath of God. So that, as you tender your everlasting well-being, and the welfare of your immortal souls; put this question closly to your hearts, and follow it earnestly till you get a determinate answer thereunto. *Am I united unto the Son of God? Doth Christ dwell in me, and am I ingraffed into him?* It is a matter of infinite weight and moment: for if you fall short of this priviledge, you are ruined everlastingly. A mistake herein may undo you utterly, without recovery. This is the foundation of all true peace and comfort; so that make a strict enquiry into it. It is a matter which may be known, for the Apostle *John* telleth us of Believers, that they knew they were in Christ, 1 *Joh.* 2. 5. and Self-examination

examination is the way to know it. And therefore take my counsel in the words of S. *Paul*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your selves, whether you be in the faith: prove your own selves: Know you not your own selves, how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* Examine and prove, *that is*, make a curious and narrow search into it: be very inquisitive concerning it; ransack your whole souls, that ye may find it out: pierce your selves through, leave no stone unturned, no corner of your hearts unrip't up. *What! know ye not your own selves? q. d.* Is it not a shame to be ignorant of your own spiritual estate, whether you be in Christ, and Christ be formed in you? Can you rest contentedly without the knowledge of it? *Why*, if you do not know it, the fault is probably in your selves, because you do not set upon the work of Self-examination; or you are slight and superficial in that work: so that enter upon it throughly and in good earnest.

My brethren, If you knew that you were united to the Son of God, your hearts would be able to make their boast of God continually; you might rejoyce in him all the day long; you might be assured of access unto him, and a gracious acceptance with him, upon all occasions: you needed not be afraid in times of evil, though one evil rumour come upon the neck of another, and one sore calamity usher in another. When others walk droopingly, and disconsolately, you might serve the Lord with alacrity and gladness of heart; and this joy of the Lord would be your strength. And if you continue out of Christ, better were it for you that you had never been born. So that it much lieth upon you, to get the knowledge of it; and therefore call your selves to an account, how the

case stands with you. Say, *How I the sure I am I planted into Christ?* If people are unacquainted with this particular touching themselves, it is mostly through the neglect, or perfunctory discharge of the work of Self-examination. As will evidently appear by these *three following considerations.*

1. Without Self-examination, *a man can never pertinently and appositely, apply the Word of God unto himself*; nor compare the frame and temper of his soul with the Word of the Lord; so as to be able to pass a righteous judgment thereupon. *My brethren*, it is the Word of God which is the rule for discovery, whether we be in Christ or not: (as I shall shew you more fully anon) but this discovery cannot be made, by a bare naked speculation of the truths contained therein, except we personally apply the truths unto our selves, and compare our selves with them. Just as it is in secular matters: The *Carpenters* line and plummet will discover the straightness, or crookedness, of a piece of timber; but this it cannot do by taking a single view of the line, unless it be applyed unto the timber. The *Standard* is appointed to shew the justness or falshood of weights and measures: but then you must bring them unto the *standard*, and compare them with the *standard*. So the Scripture is the rule for trial of mens hearts, whether they be straight or crooked: It is the standard to evidence a mans spiritual estate, whether his person will hold weight in the ballance of the sanctuary, when he cometh to be judged of the Lord: but then he must apply this rule unto himself, and compare himself with this standard. Such persons as would know that they are of God, must not only view the light; but must also bring their persons and actions unto the light,

light, *Joh. 3. 21. He that doth good cometh unto the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God.* He taketh the light of God's word and his own soul, and putteth them both together, that he may see what correspondency there is between the one and the other. And it is said of the wicked, v. 20. of that Chapter, *He hateth the light, and doth not come unto it*; that is, He cannot endure personally to apply it unto himself. You have many carnal people could be content to know the truth *in the general notion*, but they hate it *in the particular application* to their case. But if you would know whether you are in Christ, you must apply and appropriate the word of God unto your selves, and compare it with your condition. *Now*, to bring this home to our purpose, This application of the word, and comparing our selves with it, can never be done aright, without self-examination. Except the *Physician* know the constitution and temperament of the patient, he can never apply suitable remedies unto him: so except we search and enquire into the frame of our souls, we can never apply the Scripture, properly, and suitably, unto our souls. Except a man search into his wayes and actions, as well as into the word, he cannot compare those actions with the word: But he will be apt upon every turn, to run into mistakes, and practical errors: He will take that word home to himself, which doth not belong to him; and pass such a sentence upon himself, as is not to be passed upon him. It is hinted as the ground of mens deceit, and self-cozenage, because they do not look into themselves, *Prov. 21. 2. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord pondereth the hearts.* As if the holy Ghost had said, If

men did but search their own hearts, they would not be so mistaken concerning their wayes; nor pass such a false judgment upon themselves. They presently conclude that their wayes are right, because they do not throughly look into them, nor take a view of their spirits, which are the principle of action; *but God pondereth their hearts.*

2. If you would know, that you are, or whether you are, united to Christ, you must be diligent in the examination of your selves; and the reason is, *Because that is the very means which God hath especially designed to this end,* and appointed to be made use of to this purpose, to bring us unto the knowledge of it. This is a *Maxim* in Religion as clear as the noon-day, That if we would comfortably expect any mercy from the Lord, or gracious assistance unto any work or business, we must look for it in the use of such means as God hath appointed to that end, and wherein he is wont to convey such grace and assistance. Now self-examination is the means which God hath required to be made use of, to bring us to the knowledge of our ingrafture into Christ. For *Sirs*, although it is God alone who can powerfully and convincingly make it known to us; yet we must not sit still and be idle, *and say,* if God will discover it to me I shall know it: But we must wait upon him in the way wherein he is wont to meet his people to this end; which is in the duty of self-examination. If we would have our calling and election made sure, our selves must give diligence to make it sure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10.

3. Self-examination is the way to arrive at this knowledge, whether we are spiritually ingrafted into the Son: *Because hereby we shall find out those falsehoods, under which our spirits are apt to lie hid;*

and

and those deceits whereby our hearts are ready to cheat us, in passing a false judgment upon our selves. Self-examination will shew us where the cheat lieth, and upon what ground it is that we deal treacherously in this matter. You read of a people, *Isa.* 28. 15. who thought themselves to be free from the wrath of God, when indeed they were the very generation of his wrath. And what was the reason of it? whence did this deceit proceed? *Why*, they took sanctuary in lies, and covered themselves over with falshoods. *When the overflowing scourge shall pass thorow, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falshood have we hid ourselves.* The meaning I take to be this; They built their hopes of deliverance upon rotten pillars, and sandy foundations: They apprehended themselves to be in a right way, when they were not: that their hearts were for God, when indeed it was a lie; for they were set upon sin and idolatry, and full of desperate wickedness: They thought they were in the service of the Lord, and that therefore he would shew them favour, when *in truth* it was a falshood; they were in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Now how should a man discover the falshood of these pretences, and find out the fallacies whereby our hearts would impose upon us in this case? *Why*, By being diligent in the examination of our selves. There is a full Text to this purpose, *Gal.* 6. 3, 4. *For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have rejoycing in himself alone, and not in another.* As if he had said, It is no marvel if your hearts beguile you, if you do not make a narrow scrutiny into your selves. Your spirits are

treacherous, apt to put light for darkness, and darkness for light. You will be apt to entertain good thoughts and opinions of your selves, when *perhaps* you have nothing of the life and substance of godliness; and your deceitful hearts take hold of every advantage to strengthen those opinions. But if you would avoid this cheat, you must examine your selves. *Let every man prove his own work*] that is, every one that would not be thus deceived; and in order to the prevention of this self-flattery, and cozenage. If you were much in self-examination, you would not rest in the good opinions of others; nor conclude you were holy, because they thought well of you: or you would not determine of your spiritual estate, from the lives of others; that therefore you are the children of God, because you are not so bad as they; or that you were in Covenant with the Lord, because others run faster than you in the devils service: But upon the through trial of your selves it would be seen, whether you have any substantial ground of rejoycing.

So that *let me tell you again*, If you love your souls, if you would be assured to escape everlasting vengeance, that you are persons in favour with God, and shall arrive with safety at the kingdom of heaven, when all impenitent sinners are bound up in bundles together, and cast into hell fire; make it appear that you are united to Christ. Get knowledge and assurance that you have the Son; and to that end be diligent in the search of your selves: for self-examination is the way to know it.

You will say, What course shall we take in the search of this matter? or in what method shall we

we proceed, in this examination of our selves, that thereupon we may know whether we be ingrafted into Christ? This is a work and duty, in the discharge whereof eternal life it self lieth at the stake; if it be not managed aright, it may prove the occasion of a mans utter ruine and destruction. And therefore I will insist upon it *somewhat largely*, by passing over *these three heads of particulars*.

By
1. By shewing you *the nature of this duty*, That you may know wherein your work lieth in this business; or what this self-examination is, in order to finding out whether you be knit to Christ.
2. Pressing upon your spirits, some of *the principle motives* or *provocatives*, to quicken you to set speedily, and vigorously, upon the discharge of this work.
3. Subjoyning, in the close, *some special directions to guide you in the discharge of this work*: that you may come to a right conclusion, whether you have the Son; and not be deceived therein.

1. To begin with the first, of shewing you wherein your work lieth in this business of examining whether you be one with Christ, and have the Son: or *what this duty of self-examination is*. Which is a matter needful to be a little explained: Because, *it is to be feared*, that multitudes, who are called Christians, are much in the dark as to any distinct knowledge of the nature of this work: that they are not only strangers to the practise of it, but in a great measure as to any clear apprehensions concerning it. But I shall not handle it by way of description, *at large*; only I will give you some

some hints of the most material points, which have a reference to this work, and that will be needful to open our way for the directions I would give you, for the right management thereof. All that shall be delivered under this head, I have gathered into *six plain conclusions.*

Concl. 1. The first conclusion is this, *That self-examination, as to our union with Christ, is for the matter of it, a componnded duty; made up of a threefold spiritual and reflexive action, in relation to a mans self.*

There is
1. A *search*, or *enquiry* made into
2. The *probation* and *trial* of
3. The *passing sentence*, or *judgment* upon

a mans self.

Mark it Sirs, It doth not lie in one only single act of the spirit, but it doth consist of several acts. For as there are some *complicated sins*, which carry many transgressions together in the bowels of them: So there are some duties, which we may call *complicated* or *componnded duties*. And such is this of self-examination; wherein there are many actions folded up together: For it comprehends a *threefold* reflexive *act*.

1. There is an act of *inspection*, or *retrospection into a mans self*: A search or enquiry made into our persons and wayes; our inward qualifications, and all our performances. He that examineth himself, must curiously pry, and look into his own heart and practise; into his principles and conversation, and into all the workings of those principles, and the manner of them. He must descend into, and take a narrow view of every corner of his spirit, and

and the ſeveral parts of his demeanour: As a man would look with a candle into every room, and caſt his eye into every hole and crany of an houſe, for the finding out any thing which is loſt. You have it under this very ſimilitude, *Prov.* 20. 27. *The ſpirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly.* It is the candle of the Lord] *that is*, there is a ſpecial faculty put into a mans ſoul by God himſelf, whereby he is enabled to make enquiry into his innermoſt thoughts, and and the ſecret operations of his own heart: in the exerciſe whereof he may make a narrow ſcrutiny into himſelf, and look *wiſtly* into what is within him, or hath been done by him: as a man doth that taketh a torch, or candle, to ſee that which could not otherwiſe be perceived. * It is ſometimes ſtiled in reſpect to a mans wayes (which, *as I ſhall ſhew you by and by*, are a main evidence of our union with Chriſt, or eſtrangedneſs from him) *a thinking upon them*, Pſal. 119. 59. *I thought upon my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* So that then doth a perſon examine himſelf, when he ſits down and looketh into his own ſoul, what graces are there, and how they are exerciſed; what corruptions abide within him, and how much force and power they have had over him, *and the like*: When he doth bethink himſelf as to his wayes, with what care and conſcience he hath ſanctified the Sabbath; how inſtant and fervent he is on the one hand, or cold and careleſs on the other hand, in the duty of prayer; how often he doth read the Word, and meditate

* *In mente hominis, quaſi in tabulis obſignatis conſcriptum relinquitur, quid fecit, & quo animo, quod etiam tandem à conſcientia legitur & pronunciatur.* Ames. de conſc.

meditate thereupon; with what spiritualness and faithfulness, he doth fill up his particular calling and relations. When he doth take a review of all his affairs on a spiritual account. As a man that hath lost any thing in his travels, he goeth over them back again, in his thoughts: He considereth where he was such a day, and what place he lay in the other night, and who was in his company, and where he was most likely to leave that which he missetb. So doth a Christian, who is serious in self-examination; he doth traverse his wayes back again, in his retired contemplations. He bethinketh himself, what indowments he hath, with what circumspection he hath walked, how he hath improved this opportunity, and redeemed the other part of his time, &c. This is the *first reflexive act* whereof this work is compounded, *viz.* An act of *inspection*, or *retrospection into a mans self.*

2. There is an act of *probation and trial of a mans self.* When a person that examines himself hath found out the particulars to be observed, touching his heart and wayes, he doth not rest there: but immediately bringeth all to the test and touchstone, that he may see of what sort his qualifications are, and of what kind his actions have been: whether they are of the right metal and stamp, as they ought to be; and as he would have them to be: whether they be such as will pass for currant in the court of Heaven. As a careful *Goldsmith*, when he receiveth a sum of mony, doth not only count the pieces; but if any of them be suspected, or look but suspiciously, he trieth them, whether they be such as will pass in payment: So doth a Christian in this spiritual work of the examination of himself, touching his union with Christ; First he observeth and

and takes notice what is within him, and what hath been done by him, and then he trieth what metal they are of: *that is*, whether the graces which appear to be within him, are saving graces indeed, or only counterfeit coin: And whether his obedience be evangelical and spiritual obedience, or not: And whether the sins which he hath committed be such as may be stiled, *The spots of God's children*, or no. And *the reason of it lieth in this*, Because, in soul-concernments, especially, there is oftentimes a vast difference betwixt reality, and appearance. Many things at the first view, seem to be right and good; when upon a stricter enquiry they are found false and rotten. And therefore, if we would not be deceived, all things must be proved and tried. This is mentioned as an act distinct from the former, *Lam.* 3.40. *Let us search, and try our ways.* First we must labour to find out our ways what they have been; and then trie them by the light of the Word, of what sort they have been: wherein they accord with the rule, how we have deviated from it, or fallen short of living up thereunto. This is elsewhere called, *The weighing of a man's self*: in allusion to the practise of *Tradesmen* in their negotiation and traffick. They do not only view the commodities which they buy, but then they put them into the scales, to see if they will hold weight, for what they were bought. So doth a careful Christian as to his demeanour. First he observeth his own qualifications and performances; and then he he trieth whether they will hold weight in the ballance. *Job* 31. 5, 6. *If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit: Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity*; *q. d.* Let my actions be throughly sifted, and exactly

actly looked, and they will be found such as are acceptable unto the Lord. This is the *second reflexive act*, whereof self-examination is made up or compounded.

3. There is a *conclusive determination*, or *the passing sentence and judgment upon a mans self*, according to that search and trial. As it is in *Courts of Judicature* amongst men; when the cause is throughly opened, and witnesses produced, and the Law consulted in the case; then according thereunto verdict is brought in, and sentence pronounced. *Why Sirs*, self-examination is the erecting of a *Court of Judicature* in a mans breast; where, upon trial of the matter, judgment doth pass for, or against the person.* Therein a man doth gather a conclusion, touching his own wayes; that they are just, or unjust; pleasing unto God, or provocations of the wrath of God. And so concerning his person, He draweth an inference, and passeth sentence upon himself; that he is righteous or wicked; a child of God, or one of his adversaries; united unto Christ, or still estranged from him, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged.* And you have mention of the hearts passing sentence, *in both respects*. As, 1. of *condemnation*, upon supposal of the persons being wicked. 2. Of *approbation* and *absolution*, if righteous, 1 *Joh.* 3. 20. *If our heart condemn us*; that is, If upon a diligent search it pronounce sentence against us, as unsound; and such who have dealt falsely and unfaithfully in the Covenant of God. And *v.* 21. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not* [if it acquit and discharge us] *then have we confidence towards God.*

* *Conscientia respectu propositionis est lex: respectu assumptionis, testis; & respectu conclusionis maximè propriè Judex.*

Job

Job 27. 5, 6. Till I die, I will not remove mine integrity from me. My righteousness I will hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me, as long as I live; q. d. I will conclude that I am a person accepted of God, and in Covenant with him, & that I have walked in uprightness before him; whatever arguments you have urged to shake my confidence. *My righteousness I will hold fast* &c. I have concluded through grace, that I am righteous: and by this conclusion I will stick. I will not pass sentence in mine own wrong. This is the *first conclusion* asserted, for opening the nature of self-examination.

Conclus. 2. The *special faculty or power of the soul, by which this work of self-examination is performed, is the* practical judgment, *or conscience of a man.* That is the reflexive eye of the soul, whereby a person is inabled to look inward, and to take an account of his own heart and wayes. There is a *twofold spiritual eye*, whereby a man hath preheminence above all the inferiour creatures. 1. There is the eye of the *speculative understanding*, in the exercise whereof he taketh a view of matters without himself, at the remotest distance of place, or time. 2. The eye of the *practical judgment* or *conscience*, whereby he doth reflect upon himself, and animadvert upon his own spirit, and wayes. So that, your work, in this respect, if you would rightly examine your selves touching your union with Christ, is to labour to get *an awakened conscience*, and a *well informed conscience*, and a *faithful conscience*, free from guile and self-flattery. It concerneth you to take heed of deadness, and security, and treachery in the conscience: For as that is the faculty which doth eye and observe a man in his wayes; so whereby

he

he is impowred to take an account of those wayes, and to acquit or condemn himself, according to the merits of the cause, and as the matter doth require. You read of the Apostle *Paul*, that he had a witness on his side, that he was a servant of God, and walked in sincerity before the Lord; whereupon his heart was filled with joy and gladness. And *what was that witness?* Why, his conscience had examined and found it to be so, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity & godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.* And both the business of accusing, and absolving a sinner is attributed thereunto, namely to the workings of conscience, *Rom.* 2. 15. *Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another*, Joh. 8. 9. *They went out one by one, being convicted by their own consciences.* This you are sometimes to understand by *the heart and spirit* of a man, when it is said to take cognizance of the things which are within him. *The heart knoweth its own bitterness*, Prov. 14. 10. *What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?* 1 Cor. 2. 11. Again *Eccl.* 7. 21, 22. *Also take no heed to all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee. For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth, that thou thy self likewise hast cursed others.* That is, If you would set your consciences a work, they would declare plainly what is the filthiness that cleaveth to you, and the abominations that have been committed by you. So that your care must be to keep life, and vigour, and activity in your consciences: and you must take heed to your selves, that no mistakes, or falshoods, or practical errors settle within your consciences.

Conclus.

Concl. 3. Although it be the conscience of a man, by which he doth examine himself touching his union with Christ, and passeth judgment upon himself in that case: *yet this work can never be performed effectually and to purpose, without the concurrent assistance of the Spirit of God, and the powerful influence of the holy Ghost.* It is the Spirit of God, by whom the conscience of a sinner is excited and stirred up unto this work, and directed and guided therein; that it may see clearly into matters, and may pass a right and convincing sentence thereupon. It is the same Spirit alone which converteth a sinner from his natural estate, that can *convincingly* shew him his sad estate in order to conversion. And the same Spirit alone which planteth grace into the soul, can discover that grace where it is planted; that so a Believer may take comfort therein, and conclude from thence that he is ingrafted into Christ. And therefore when we attain any comfortable evidences of our estate Godward, we are said to be *sealed by the Spirit*: because it depends upon his assistance and testimony, *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise: which is the earnest of our inheritance.* It is a manner of speech taken from the practise of men; who for confirmation and assurance of a deed or grant, give writings under seal: so hath the Lord been pleased, *saith the Apostle*, to deal with you; you have not only the promises of acceptance, and pardon, and eternal life made unto you; but these promises are sealed: *How? why*, by the testimony of the Spirit. Again, in making of a bargain men are wont to give *earnest* to confirm it; which is not only a part of payment, but for assurance of the whole: This earnest,

 saith

faith he, you have received; which is the witness of the holy Ghost. It is not the testimony of conscience alone, can make a man *effectually* to know his relation to Christ, or separation from Christ, without the concurrent operation of the Spirit. There is a famous Text in reference to both, *Rom.* 8. 15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage, again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry* Abba *father*. Mark it, If a man be brought into bondage by the knowledge of his undone condition, by seeing himself to lie under the guilt of his sins, and obnoxious to the insupportable wrath of God, it is through the operation of the Spirit. And if he be able to plead his adoption, and to look up unto God as his Father in Christ; it is by the efficacious workings of the same Spirit. So that for the examination of your selves concerning your union with Christ, and finding out whether you are knit unto him, your work *in this respect* lieth in two things (1) In being earnest *petitioners* and *supplicants* at the throne of grace, for the special assistance of the holy Ghost, to make this discovery to you; to strike in with your consciences in bearing witness unto your spiritual estate. *That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: that the eyes of your understandings being enlightned, ye may know, what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints*, Eph. 1. 17, 18. (2) Your business lieth in *a careful attendance upon the dictates of the Spirit*, and taking heed that you resist not the holy Ghost, in these actings. For it is an ordinary thing in many of the people of God *to be accessary to the disconsolateness of their own souls*, by

by opposing the spirit of consolation. They go on without that comfort, which they might have, in the knowledge of their union with Christ, because they refuse to be comforted; as the *Psalmist* speaketh of himself, *Psal.* 77. 2. This is a common distemper in times of strong temptations. As the ungodly resist *the spirit of conviction*, and *conversion*: so believers themselves are apt to withstand, and strive against, *the spirit of consolation*. And therefore your work is to give diligent attendance upon the Spirit, and to hear attentively what he shall speak unto you.

Concl. 4. The way of procedure in this business of self-examination, or the means whereby it must be found out, whether we are united to Christ, is, *By consulting and enquiring into those marks and signs, which are the evidencing characters, and properties of that union.* For *Sirs*, the change wrought upon a Believer, by his oneness with Christ, is a *relative change*; and cannot be seen immediately in it self, and of it self: But it is discerned and discovered unto the spirit of a man, by its properties and concomitants; which are as certain *characteristical marks*, and tokens, whereby the state of union with Christ is differenced, and distinguished, from that of being strangers unto him. As it is in natural things, If I would know, whether this or the other stone be a true diamond, or a counterfeit; whether this, or the other piece of money, be pure gold, or adulterate metal; I must consider, whether it have the properties of pure gold; and whether the stone have the properties of a right diamond, or not: So *upon a spiritual account*, If I would know whether I am one with Christ, and in the state of grace, I must enquire whether I be made

partaker of such things as are the properties and concomitants of that estate, and peculiar thereunto. These we call *marks*, and *signs*; because they denote and signifie, what spiritual condition a person is in. *

* *Signum est quod seipsum, & aliquid præter se potentiæ cognoscentis repræsentat.*

I know there are some who have spoken very slightly and contemptibly of this way of procedure: They would have us only depend upon the *immediate witness of the Spirit*, without making use of these marks and signs. But *my Brethren*, this is the way which the servants of God have taken, in passing a judgment upon themselves; who are left upon record in the Scripture, as patterns for our imitation. And if you would not be deluded, you must take this course likewise. For else how shall we know, that such an immediate testimony, *as they speak of*, is from the Spirit of God, and not a delusion of Satan, or a fond perswasion of our own deceitful spirits, but by bringing it to the touchstone of these marks and signs? See 1 *Joh.* 2. 3. *And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.* Mind it, *saith the Apostle*, we are acquainted with Christ, and interested in him; and through grace we may come to the knowledge of it. How, or by what means? *Why*, by this mark or character, *if we keep his commandments*; that will be a certain sign or evidence of it. 1 *Joh* 3. 14. *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.* As if he had said, By this mark or character we discern our translation into the state of grace, *Psal.* 119. 94. *I am thine, save me, for I have sought thy precepts.* Mark it, *David* had not only a title to the favour of God, but he was

was able to plead that title; *I am thine.* How do you prove it? *Why*, by this mark or evidence, *Because I have sought thy precepts.* My brethren, the soul of a man is not acted in this work, *by way of Enthusiasme*; nor are we to depend upon a *special revelation*: but the work is to be carried on by way of *spiritual reasoning* or *argumentation.* *Thus*, he who hath respect to all the commandments of God, hath the Son, and is united unto the Son: Now, *saith the soul*, through grace I find, upon a diligent search of my self, that I bear a respect to all Gods commandments; and from thence I conclude, that I have the Son of God, and am ingrafted into him. *Again*, He that loveth the Brethren is in the state of grace, translated from death to life. And through mercy, *saith the soul*, I find this property in my self: So that hence I gather, that I am in the state of grace. Take an instance on the other hand.

Whosoever walketh in darkness, hath no fellowship with Christ. My conscience tells me, saith the sinner, *that I walk in darkness. Hence it evidently followeth, that, whilst I remain in this condition, I have no fellowship with Christ.*

So that the convictions of conscience, on the one hand, as to the sad estate of a sinner; are *rational convictions*: and the witness of conscience on the other hand, in behalf of the Saints, that they are in Christ, is a *rational witness*; and the Spirit of God doth joyn in a concurrent testimony therewith, *Rom.* 8. 16. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* Mark it, not only *to our spirits*, but *with our spirit.* They joyn together in giving evidence of a Believers union with Christ. This is the fourth conclusion,

That the way of procedure, in this business of self-examination, is by marks and signs. For my part, I do not question, but the holy Ghost may please, at some peculiar seasons, to dart comfort (*as it were*) into the heart of a Believer; and in *a kind of immediate way*, to signifie to him, that he is in favour with God, and in a state of reconciliation; without any express or sensible reflection, *at that instant of time*, upon the gracious qualifications, which are the marks of that estate: But then remember, that *in the conclusion* it must be reduced to marks and signs. For else, how shall a Christian be satisfied, that it was indeed from the Spirit of God, unless he prove it by such evidencing properties as are given to that end?

Concl. 5. The special marks and signs, or evidential properties and characters, by which we should examine our selves, touching our union with Christ, and from which we may be able to judge most clearly, whether we are in him, *are such as are adequate and proportionate to that estate.* Such marks of union as are appropriate thereunto, and run exactly parallel therewith: that are of the same extent, and latitude, as union with Christ is; and in no wise appertain or belong to any other whomsoever. Such marks as these, *Logicians* call *properties in the strictest acception*; that belong *only* to such as are in Christ, and are to be found *in all* that are in him, *at all times* and seasons. *

* *Proprium quarto modo, quod omni, soli, & semper convenit specici, & cum eâ reciprocatur.*

This will be cleared up, to the apprehensions of the meanest capacity, by giving you a *distinction of three sorts* of marks and signes, as to a mans spiritual state, or relation to Christ: and by shewing

you

you the *several use*, that is to be made of each of them, in the business of self-examination, or trial of our union with Christ.

There are { 1. *Exclusive*, or *Negative*. 2. *Inclusive*, or *Accumulative* 3. *Adequate*, and *proportionate* } markes and properties.

1. There are *exclusive*, or *negative marks and signs*, as to union with Christ. Properties *of the first rank*, as they are commonly stiled: *that is*, such as belong *to all* who are ingraffed into the Lord Jesus, but do *not solely*, or *peculiarly*, appertain to them: They are of a greater extent and latitude than union with Christ is. *To make it plain by instances*, These are properties of the first rank, *viz.* To have an enlightened understanding, and competent knowledge of the mysteries of godliness: To be convinced of the evil of sin, and to have the conscience awakened in the sense of it: To believe the word of God to be true: To perform external duties, and to carry on a reformation in the life and practise, *and the like*. These are properties *to be found in all*, who are knit unto Christ; *but not in them only*. An unregenerate person may partake of them likewise. And what is the use of these in the work of self-examination, as to our union with Christ? *Why*, By the want of these, a person may conclude *negatively*, that he is not in Christ: but by the attainment of these alone he cannot conclude *affirmatively*, that he is in him. Therefore I call them *negative marks*, for distinction sake. The absence of any of these, will be a sign that a person is excluded

from this priviledge of *having the Son*; but the presence of them will not prove that he is partaker thereof. If a sinner hath no knowledge of divine truths, but is grosly ignorant of the fundamentals of Religion, he may conclude *negatively*, that he is none of Christ's, *Prov.* 19. 2. 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. But although he hath much knowledge of the principles of Religion, he cannot from thence conclude *affirmatively*, that he doth belong to Christ, *Rom.* 2. 17, 18, 21. 1 *Cor.* 13. 2. See it in the case of *legal humiliation*. A man may conclude *negatively*, that he is not a child of God, if he were never humbled for sins against the Lord, *Jer.* 44. 9, 10. But he cannot gather *in the affirmative*, that he is at peace with God, only because he hath felt some trouble upon his spirit for transgressing against him, 1 *Kings* 21. *v.* 27, 29. 1 *Sam.* 24. 16, 17. In the case of *outward reformation*, a person may determine *negatively*, that he is not in covenant with God, if he live in the practise of open sins, and the common neglect of external duties, *Psal.* 36. 1, 2, 3. But he cannot infer *affirmatively*, that he is one of the peculiar people of God, because he hath broken off the practise of some grosser wickednesses, & setteth upon the discharge of some outward duties, *Luke* 18. 11, 12. *So I might go over the rest.* Every true Believer is convinced of the evil of sin; but all persons under conviction of sin cannot say, that therefore they are true Believers. All sincere Christians have their consciences awakened, and assent to the truth of Scripture-doctrines: But it will not follow, that all whose consciences are awakened, and believe the Scriptures *by an historical faith*, are to be reckoned amongst the number of sincere Christians.

2. There

2. There are *inclusive marks*, or properties *of the second rank*: which belong *only* to such as are united to Christ, but are not to be found in all of them. *As now for instance*, To have such high degrees of this, or the other grace, as some believers have attained: To have such a measure of power over their lusts and corruptions, as some eminent Saints have had: To be versed in the higher mysteries of godliness, as they who have their spiritual senses exercised to discern betwixt good and evil. To be strong in the faith, as *Abraham*; and renowned for meekness, as *Moses*; and eminent for patience, as *Job*; and to labour more abundantly, as *Paul*, and the like. Now what is the use of this sort of marks in the work of self-examination? *Why*, from the attainment of them, a Christian may conclude *affirmatively*, with a great deal of clearness and undoubtedness, that he is a member of Christ: But he cannot from the want of them conclude *negatively*, that he is not interested in Christ. *And this is the reason*, Because a mans spiritual estate Godward, and Christward, doth not depend upon the degrees of grace; but upon the truth of grace. A person may have his heart sound in the statutes of God, who hath not arrived at that measure of acquaintance with God, as some others have done. There are several forms of Scholars in the School of Christ, and yet all of them savingly taught by him. There are divers ranks of persons in the houshold of faith, of different growth and stature; *babes*, and *children*; as well as *men* grown up to their full strength, and *old experienced disciples*, Mat. 15. 28. Mat. 8. 26. 1 Joh. 2. 12, 13. Rev. 3. 8.

This is well to be observed, because the neglect of

of the consideration of this very thing, hath occasioned the troubles and perplexities of many poor souls, that walk in the anguish and bitterness of their spirits. They cannot find such workings in their own hearts, as sometimes are mentioned to be in the hearts of *David* and *Samuel*, and *Isaiah* and *Paul*, and other servants of God in Scripture; and from thence they presently draw sad consequences touching themselves; that surely their estate is naught, and their hearts are rotten: Whereas *possibly* these are workings of spirit that are not ever to be found in all the people of God; but only in some that are eminent above others, and have attained to an higher pitch of godliness than others. Only let me add this as a *memento* by the way, That the weakest believer, who hath the least degrees of grace, is still pressing after the highest. He doth not sit down contented with any measures attained; but is still thirsting after more. He would, if it were possible, pluck up corruption by the very root, out of his soul; and be serviceable unto the Lord at the highest rate, and in the most excellent manner, *Phil.* 3. 13, 14, 15. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1.

3. There are *adaequate*, and *proportionate marks and signs of our union with Christ*. Such as are of an *even size* with the state of grace; that carry the same breadth with them, as interest in Christ doth; and run exactly and precisely, parallel thereto. Properties *in the strictest acception*, that are to be found *only* in the children of God, and are to be found *in all* of them without exception, and *at all times* and seasons. As now for instance, To have the Law of God wrote upon our hearts; to worship God in Spirit; to hate every false way; to walk before the Lord, as in his sight and presence; to resign up

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our selves unreservedly to Christ, and to God by him. And these are as *two-edged swords*, that cut both ways. In the examination of your selves, and passing judgment upon your selves, touching your union with Christ, you may conclude from them both *negatively* and *affirmatively*. If you be without these qualifications, you are strangers unto Christ: and such as are thus qualified, are implanted into him. These marks you have plentifully scattered up and down the Scriptures, *Rom.* 8. 6, *To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* Mat. 10. 32. 33. *Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess, before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* Ezek. 18. 30. *Repent and turn your selves from all your transgressions: so iniquity shall not be your ruine.* But *except you repent, you shall perish*, Luke 13. 3. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*, Mat. 5. 8. And *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*, Mat. 5. 7. And *he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy*, Jam. 2. 13. *He that believeth on him* [Christ] *is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already*, Joh. 3. 18.

These *adaquate properties* are such as you should principally take notice of, and select for your use in the trial of your union with Christ; and for the clearing of it up to your selves, whether you are ingrafted into him. You will know them by these three conditions. 1. There must be *universality of the subject*, they must be found in all persons united to the Son. 2. *Peculiarity*, they must be such as belong only unto them. 3. *Indefinitenes of time*,

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such as appertain to the Saints at all seasons. This is *the fifth Conclusion* I intended, to open the nature of self-examination.

Concl. 6. The last assertion is this. *That such marks and signs, of whatever sort they be, whereupon a Christian may confidently rest in the examination of himself, and according to the tenour of which he may pass a righteous sentence upon himself, whether he be united to Christ; must be clearly deduced from the Scriptures, and plainly bottomed thereupon.* Mark it, *I say*, if you would not be deceived and proceed upon mistakes, you must fetch your evidences from thence; and see that they be such characters of union as are warranted thereby. Else you may possibly get some presumptuous hopes, but you can never attain unto a well-grounded assurance: For the Word of God is the only sure foundation, which you can build upon; in this case of enquiry. And *the reason lieth herein*, because our Lord Jesus in his proceedings, will judge us by the Scriptures, and pass everlasting sentence upon us according to the tenour of the Scriptures: And therefore by that rule we should judge our selves. If a man have a trial at Law, touching his estate or life; and would know before-hand, whether his cause be good; he doth not depend upon what this neighbours thoughts are, or the others opinion is: But he searcheth the Law, and addresseth himself to men skilful in the Law; as knowing the judge will proceed according to that Rule. Why *Sirs*, At the great and general *Assizes*, Christ will try all causes by the Word of God, and pass judgment upon all sorts according to the Word: so that by it we are to be guided in the trial of our selves, *Joh.* 12. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words*,

words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day. As Christ himself is ordained to be the judge of the quick and dead: so the doctrines which he hath delivered, will be the rule of all his judicial proceedings; both in acquitting the righteous, and condemning the wicked. You read, *Dan.* 7. 10. that when judgment is set, *The books shall be opened*: And this is one of those books which shall be consulted with in the case, *The book of the Statutes and Ordinances of the King of heaven*; the Law which he appointed for a testimony in *Jacob*. As the *book* of every mans *conscience* shall be opened for their conviction, wherein they shall read their guilt in legible characters: For that is a book of record wherein mens actions are entred; and although now it be shut, and sinners will not look into it; many of the lines and sentences are almost obliterated, or blotted, that they cannot be read: Yet at the day of accounts, God will refresh and recover the lustre of those ancient writings. And as the *book of life* shall be opened, *Rev.* 20. 12. *that is to say*, the decrees of God will be then published and made known, which now are sealed up in his breast, and locked up in his *Archives*. Then it will be seen who are appointed to life, for the glorifying of the free grace of God; and whom he purposed to leave in their sins and perish, for the exaltation of his justice. *I say*, As these books shall be opened, so there is another book to be made use of in that day, *to wit*, The great Statute-book of the Lord of Hosts, *the records* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, *Jam.* 2. 12. *So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of liberty*; i. e. by the word of the truth of the Gospel of Christ; the whole

whole Word of God registred in the Scriptures, *Chap.* 1. 23, 25. which, if hearkened unto, is the means to set men at liberty from their bondage to sin, and Satan: *By the Gospel of Christ*; which though it give no manner of countenance unto licentiousness, but is a strong argument against it; yet proclaimeth liberty to penitent sinners, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, upon a due submission to the government of Christ. Besides it may be called a *Law of liberty* or freedom, because it doth not flatter any man as to his spiritual condition, but dealeth openly and freely with him, and telleth him his own, without tergiversation. And this affords us *another reason* why we should fetch our marks of union from the Scripture; because it will deal freely and plainly in the discovery of our spiritual estate, without respect of persons. For *Sirs*, if you build your confidence upon the opinions of men, or upon the base dictates of your own hearts; you may be deceived. Men may sooth you up in your sins; and your hearts will flatter you; but the word of God will deal freely, and impartially with you: It will represent matters as they are, in their own proper colours, *without favour, or affection.*

So that this is an excellent means to overthrow presumptuous hopes, and to build aright in our expectations of eternal life; when we fetch *all our marks and signs of being in Christ*, from the Scriptures; and bring our evidences unto the Scriptures. Thou hopest to be saved through Christ, because thou wast born in the Church, and baptized, and performest some outward duties of Christ's appointment. Nay, but, *O vain man*, where doth the Scripture say, these are tokens and evidences of uni-

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on with Christ, and salvation through him? Thou hopest for admission into heaven, upon the account of Christ, because thou art free from such scandalous sins, whereof others are guilty: thou knowest such and such truths, whereof many are ignorant: or because such godly persons converse with thee, and have a good opinion of thee. But, *poor deluded wretch*, where doth the Scripture say, that any, or all of these are marks of having the Son, or of coming to the kingdom of heaven, by the mediation of the Son? Remember, *my brethren*, that the Word of God is appointed, not only for the rule of faith, and guide of our conversations, but also for the trial of our spiritual estate; whether we be interested in Christ, and united unto him: That we may have hope indeed, and not only a presumptuous confidence, which will make us ashamed at the last, *Rom.* 15. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*, Psal. 130. 5. *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait: and in his word do I hope.*

So much for the *first thing* I intended under this use of Trial, *viz.* *to shew you what this self-examination is*, and wherein consisteth your work in the performance of it.

2. *By way of motive, and prescriptive*: *to quicken and stir you up, to the discharging of it*: it is a duty whereunto the heart of a man is hardly brought; as indeed all spiritual work is unpleasful, and unpleasing to flesh and blood. So that, as we need *line upon line*, and *precept upon precept*, to dispel the mists of ignorance whereby our minds are clouded,

and

and to prevent the mistakes whereupon we are apt to proceed in this work: so we need *motive upon motive*, and one spiritual argument upon the neck of another, to cure the backwardness of our hearts, whereby we are commonly averse to the performance of this work. I will not be large under this head, but only press upon you these *four moving considerations*, or *incentives*.

Mot. 1. If you be loath to enter throughly, into the disquisition of this matter, and to debate the case with your selves, whether you are one with Christ, or not; *That very thing* will be a shrewd argument against you, that you are utter strangers unto Christ; and in no wise partakers of salvation through him. It will be a sign that your profession is unsound, and your hearts rotten, when you are unwilling to search into your spiritual condition. As when a *Tradesman* will not suffer his wares to be throughly viewed, it ministers ground of suspition, that they are not right and good: *So it is in these spiritual affairs*; If you are hardly brought to make enquiry into your selves, it will yield matter of suspition, that you are conscious of some wickedness allowed in your selves; and that your hearts are not right in the sight of the Lord. For *my brethren*, It is not truth, but falshood, that hateth the light, and will not come to the light, lest it should be discovered. A person that is indeed in Covenant with God, and dealeth faithfully with him, in living up to the terms of that Covenant, is willing to be searched to the uttermost, *Psal.* 26. 2, 3. *Examine me, O Lord, and prove me, trie me and know my heart. For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth. I have not sate with vain persons*, &c.

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Mot. 2. It concerns you to examine diligently, whether you be united unto Christ, *Because* it is an ordinary thing for men and women to be mistaken in this respect: to think that they have the Son, and are in a state of salvation, when as in truth they lie still in the gall of bitterness: And this mistake is the cause of their eternal ruine. From hence it is that they neglect to seek after a remedy, because in their own apprehensions they are safe already: For, as our Saviour saith, *They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick*, Mat. 9. 12. Whilst men have good conceits of their own condition, they rest secure therein, and are not sensible of the need of having it changed. * And there are multitudes of this sort, who *say they are Jews, when they are the Synagogue of Satan*, as it is expressed, *Rev.* 3. 9. *That is*, they imagine themselves to be, and would have others esteem them as living members of the body of Christ; when as in reality they are nothing else, but the children of the devil. You find it was the *house of Jacob*, that is, the generality of the people, who were thus deceived, *Isa.* 48. 1, 2, 3, 4. They were obstinate and obdurate sinners, their neck was an iron sinew, and their brow as brass: and yet they *called themselves of the holy City, and stayed themselves upon the God of Israel.* And *Rev.* 3. 1. it is mentioned of the *Church of Sardis*, that is, the body of the people (for unto them Christ speaketh by his Spirit: Although the Epistle was directed to the Angel, yet it was to be communicated to the Church, *v.* 6.) *That they had a name to live, whereas indeed they were dead.*

* *Immittit Diabolus securitatem, ut inferat perditionem. Neque dinumerari possunt, quantos hac inanis spes umbra detiperit.* Aug.

Mot. 3. If upon the examination of your selves, you shall find, that through grace you are indeed united to Christ, and make it sure to your selves that you have the Son; *the sweetness of that knowledge, or assurance, will abundantly recompense you, for all the pains you were at, in the search of it, and the travel you took in pursuance after it.* O what an excellent priviledge will this be, *to be able to say*, that Christ is yours; that his death is a satisfaction for your sins, and the salvation he purchased is your inheritance, and that he is now at the right hand of the Father interceding on your behalf? With what inexpressible joy will this fill your spirits? How will it sweeten your enjoyments, and ease your burdens, and bring a vein of consolation and gladness into every condition that you are in, and under every providence that befalleth you! You will then be able to read the Scriptures with delight, *when you can say*, This promise conveyeth mercy to my soul; and this is a blessing wherein I am a sharer: And as for the threatnings of judgment, they speak not a word of terror to my soul, for *I am not under the Law, but under grace*, being united unto Jesus the head of the Covenant of grace. This will inable you to walk cheerfully, throughout your pilgrimage; and to meditate upon the excellencies of God, with an holy exultation; *when you can say*, This God is my God, upon the account of Christ, unto whom I am knit inseparably: This infinite power is ingaged for my protection, and safeguard; this incomprehensible wisdom is at work for my direction, and guidance; this allsufficiency is for my satisfaction, and blessedness; and the like. Then you may say with the Prophet, *Hab.* 3. 19. *The Lord God is my strength, and*

and he will make my feet like Hinds feet: and he will make me to walk upon my high places. Then you may appropriate the Lord and his attributes unto your selves; and be assured he will make haste for your preservation and deliverance, *as speedily and swiftly, as the Hind runneth into her covert*: and that he will set you on high in the munitions of rocks. I might thus expatiate abundantly, in setting forth the sweetness of this knowledge of your union with Christ. Then you would taste real comfort in the accomodations of this life, and be no way terrified or dismayed at the apprehensions of death: for it will but translate you hence into a paradise of bliss and glory.

Mot. 4. Consider seriously *in the last place*, That although upon the examination of your selves, it should appear that you are still in the state of wrath, and condemnation, without a saving interest in the Son of God; yet the finding it to be so, would be one good step towards your restauration, and recovery out of that estate; and make way for your future getting into Christ. *It is less dangerous, for a man to be a stranger unto Christ, and know that he is so; than to be in that condition, and not to know it.* This I add to remove the main impediment, that hindreth mens setting about the work of self-examination: For *I am verily perswaded*, herein lieth a principal obstacle. They are loath to search themselves, lest they should find the worst by themselvs. Just as some careless Shop-keepers, that are run much behind hand, they cannot endure to look into their books, or to cast up their accounts; lest they should be acquainted with their own poverty, and see in what a low condition they are. But *mind it Sirs*, it is better to trie and know that you are under the

guilt of your sins, and children of the wrath of God; then to continue such, and not to know it! It is the knowledge of a sinners perishing condition will cause him to hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ; and make him restless in his spirit till he get into Christ. These are the people to whom Christ is sent, to bring deliverance; such as find they are sinners, and are heavy laden under the burden of sin, *Isa.*61.1, 2, 3. They are *such lost sheep*, which the great Shepherd of souls will seek after; *that is*, such as are sensible of their lost condition, *Ezek.* 34. 16. *I will seek that which is lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: But I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them with judgment.* And it is ignorance of mens misery and wretchedness, which is the devils great engine, whereby he carrieth sinners blindfold, and headlong into the pit of destruction. As the knowledge of the disease is the first part of the cure; so it is the knowledge of a mans damnable condition, which is one of the first steps unto his conversion and salvation.

This is all I shall speak *to the second head* under the Use of *Trial*: By way of motive and provocative thereunto.

3. Let me close this Use with *some special directions*, to guide you in the discharge of this work of self-examination: That you may come to a right conclusion, and resolution of the case, *Whether you are spiritually ingrafted into Christ, and be such as have the Son, and life through him, or not.* And here I might give you a catalogue of Scripture-marks and evidences, for trial upon this account: But I shall

shal not multiply particulars; we will only insist upon the principal matter to be enquired into, for proof of your union with the Son of God. And a little to direct you in the method of your proceeding herein, that it may be done effectually and successfully, you must diligently heed and observe these following *Rules of advice*; wherein I will proceed *by way of gradation*, the better to help both your understandings and memories.

Direct. 1. For the examination and trial of your selves, and in order to the passing a righteous sentence upon your selves, whether you are united to Christ, *You must, firstly, and fundamentally enquire, if the grace of regeneration hath been powred out upon you, and a sound conversion wrought within you.* This is the *foundation evidence* of a mans having the Son; and other marks are made use of for discovery of this, and in a subserviency to the manifestation hereof. *And the reason of it is obvious*, Because in the day of conversion this union is made up: By the spirit of regeneration, Christ doth take possession of sinners for himself; and by a living faith, which is one of the graces then planted in their souls, they do receive Christ, and embrace him as theirs: and so are knit unto him; *as hath been largely opened.* By a through conversion, the Lord Jesus doth cull out a people from the world, and gather them unto himself: So that this is primarily and chiefly to be sought into, whether you are truly converted, and made partakers of the renewing grace of the holy Ghost. For *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Here is the grand question, *Are we new creatures? Is there a through change wrought upon our spirits? Is corruption mortified in us, and the power of it subdued; and a new principle of holiness*

put into, and ingraven upon our hearts? Thus it will be if you are one with Christ. Except you are converted, you are strangers to him, and have no saving interest in him, *Rom.* 8. 10. *If Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin: but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.* The body is dead] *that is*, the body of corruption is mortified, and the force of it is taken away, whereby it exercised dominion over you: As before you were dead in sin, so now you are dead unto sin; and quickned and made alive unto righteousness.

Here is the failure of many, and the occasion of their being deceived in this point of their belonging to Christ: They sometimes look into the actions of their lives, but never seriously consider, whether the grace of conversion be shed abroad into their hearts. They rest in a civil, *moral conversation*; and do not throughly weigh whether they are made partakers of the *spirit of regeneration*. Whereas this is the fundamental evidence of our union with Christ, 1 *Joh.* 4. 13. *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* And *Rom.* 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.* That is, If he have not those gracious qualifications which are infused into the soul by the Spirit, in the work of conversion: If he have not his heart moulded anew, and fashioned aright by the holy Ghost: If he have not the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; which was the spirit that rested upon Christ, he is none of his. *Isa.* 11. 2. This is *firstly*, and *fundamentally*, to be enquired after, whether the work of conversion

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be wrought upon us, and the grace of regeneration be formed in us.

Direct. 2. If a person would be inabled to take cognizance of himself, and to pass a right judgment upon himself, whether he be converted, and so knit to Jesus; *He must of necessity, in order thereunto, be well instructed in the nature, and quality of conversion. My meaning is this,* He must rightly understand wherein a sound and sincere conversion lieth, and what a change it maketh upon the soul, and what effects it produceth: that so he may not mistake a *feigned* conversion, for a *true*; and a slight work upon the spirit, which is common to the wicked, for the grace of regeneration which is peculiar to the people of God.

For *mark it, Sirs,* There is a false conversion as well as a true: and counterfeit grace, as well as that which is grace indeed, and in reality. As there is a feigned faith, and formal worship, and hypocritical obedience, so there is a counterfeit conversion, *Jer.* 3. 10. *Her treacherous sister* Judah *hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord.* There is much deceit and treachery in this work; there may be a turning from sin, when it is done in falshood; there may be an inward work upon the heart, that doth not amount to a saving change, or sanctifying of the heart. *As for instance.* (1.) There may be a kind of abhorrence and forsaking of *some wicked ways*, to cleave the faster unto *others*. A sinner may shake off some kind of pride, to feed his covetousness, and in compliance therewith; He may leave his profaneness, and become an Idolater or superstitious. As it was in the case of *Micha*, Judg. 17. 2, 5. When his mother cursed and bann'd for her money that

was stollen, this startled his conscience, and made him vomit up the sweet morsel, which he had swallowed down. *But the man* Micah *had an house of Gods, and made an Ephod, and a Teraphim.* A sinner may leave his worldliness, and become loose and wanton: He may cast off his open debauchery, and become a secret opposer of the power of godliness. For *as sin is contrary to grace, and striveth against it: so there are corruptions which are contrary to one another, and fight one against the other,* Jam. 4. 1. (2.) There is a kind of conversion from sin, to civility: When a person leaveth his swearing, and drunkenness, and revelling, *and the like*; and becometh a civil man, and of an ordinary external demeanour, but proceedeth no further, *Mat.* 23. 27, 28. (3) There may be an abandoning and casting away many miscarriages in the practise, when yet the heart still hankereth after them; and were it not for some restraints of providence, would quickly rush into the actual commission of them. What could have been spoken more like to a convert than that of *Balaam*? Numb. 24. 13. *If* Balak *would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind: but what the Lord saith that will I speak.* When yet, he *loved the wages of unrighteousness,* and fain would have cursed *Israel,* 2 Pet. 2. 15. (4.) There may be a kind of conversion from sin for the present, with a secret purpose of the heart to return to it again, in convenient season. A sinner may fall out with his lusts, and be filled with dislike of them, for some present mischief they have done him; when he is corrected for them, with an outward judgment; and yet the heart intend no total divorce,

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or separation. *Just as friends may fall out in a fit of passion; but when they are come to themselves, they are easily reconciled again.* As it was in the case of the *Jews*, Jer. 34. 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17. When the King of *Babylons* army fought against *Jerusalem*, and the Princes and people were in great distress, they turned and did that which was right in the sight of the Lord: But when the distress was over, they returned back again to their sins as fast as ever. So it is with many carnal people when they are on their sick beds: O how hot are they then against their sins! and what a cry will they make, as if none were more filled with hatred against sin! But when once the sickness is over, *they quickly repent of their repentance.* See how far the people went in time of a destroying plague, when they were every hour in jeopardy of their lives, *Psal.* 78. 34, 35, 36. *When he slew them, then they sought him*; that is, they prayed to him, and they lamented after the Lord; they poured out their supplications in the time of chastisement. *And they returned*] that is, they left their sins, and promised amendment, and *possibly* made solemn vows & Covenants never to return to them again; if God would deliver them but this once, they would serve him for ever. *And they enquired early after God*] that is, earnestly and affectionately, as if they were eagerly set upon regaining his favour, and nothing would satisfie them without it: They enquired after him, as if they had been ready to do whatsoever he should command them. *And they remembred that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.* So that this was not only a sudden flash of their spirits, but a matter done upon some kind of deliberation: they were convinced that it was best

best for them to serve the Lord, and they cast off their sins upon that conviction. And yet all was done but in hypocrisie, as it followeth, v. 36. *Nevertheless they did flatter him with their lips, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.*

Now if persons be not rightly instructed, in the nature of a true conversion, and where the difference is betwixt it, and this counterfeit work; it is impossible they should rightly judge, if themselves are truly converted. If they be not rightly informed of the nature of saving grace, they cannot rightly determine, whether they are partakers of it. I am perswaded that this is the original of the presumption, and self-deceit of many. *They presently conclude themselves to be godly, because they are not well instructed in the nature of godliness.* They think that they have repented unto salvation, because they know not wherein such repentance doth consist: they take the form of godliness, for the power of it; and a legal repentance, for evangelical. If they find some convictions and trouble in their spirits for sin, they are presently willing to believe it is a conversion from sin: If there be found in their hearts some slight affections to the word, they apprehend themselves to be savingly wrought upon by the word: If in their conversations they leave some old sins, and turn over a new leaf, they imagine themselves to be new creatures. Whereas a saving conversion is another kind of matter; it maketh a change in the whole nature of the sinner. It is not limited and confined to any particular faculties of the soul, but extendeth it self to the renovation of the whole man, *Jer.* 24. 7. It doth

doth not only set a man free from some grosser acts of iniquity, which a natural conscience will startle at; but setteth up a standing enmity in the soul against every false way, whether greater or lesser, whether they be sins of the flesh or of the spirit, *Psal.* 119. 104. And this enmity is a lasting, irreconcileable enmity, such as shall never be rooted out again. It is not as the damming up of a stream with mounds and banks, which when they are broken, it runneth the same way with as great a violence as ever; but it is as the cleansing of the fountain, and turning the water into another channel, *Jer.* 3. 19. A sound conversion doth not only turn the soul from sin, but causeth him to return unto the Lord, *even unto the Lord*; and actually ingageth him in all the parts of his service, *Joel* 2. 12. *Jer.* 4. 1, 2. *There is a kind of conversion from sin, which is not a returning to the most High*: when persons take up their rest in negative righteousness, and abstaining from some pollutions; but cannot endure to be in subjection to the whole government of Christ; they hate the positive part of Religion, which consisteth in a close walking with God, and studying in all things to approve themselves unto him. A sound conversion bringeth a man unto the Lord, that he may become his servant, and have his fruit unto holiness, *Rom.* 6. 22. It is not every strong conviction of the excellency of Religion, accompanied with some faint inclinations and resolutions to close with it, that will amount to a saving conversion: But in every respect it must be an universal work. *For it is a turning of the whole man, from the whole service of sin, unto the whole obedience unto the will of God, during the whole course of our lives.* And this is a matter you must give diligence

gence to get right apprehensions of: For *if you erre in the premises, you will mistake in the conclusion deduced from those premises*: If you know not wherein the nature of conversion and regeneration consisteth; you can never rightly pass sentence upon your selves, whether you are converted and regenerate.

Direct. 3. The third Rule of direction is this. *That the grace of regeneration and conversion, which is the fundamental evidence of union with Christ, is not alwayes discerned in the first plantation of it into the soul*; or if it be discerned, yet it may afterwards be called into question, concerning its truth and savingness; *and therefore for the finding out whether you have that grace, you must enquire into the fruits and effects which are produced thereby.* You must examine your works, to prove that you are made Gods workmanship; and search into your conversations, that it may appear you are partakers of a sound conversion. 'Tis the exercise of repentance in the life, that must manifest the grace of repentance poured forth into the heart: and your walking in the wayes of new obedience, that must evidence your being made new creatures. *And the reason of it is*, Because it is not alwayes perceived in the first infusion of grace into the soul: or at least the sinner may be in doubt, whether it be a saving work which he finds wrought within him. Although he find and feel a present change in his spirit; yet he may question whether it be such a change, as will speake him a true Convert. So that the way to put it out of question, is to examine our obedience, and practical holiness, which is the natural product of the principle of regeneration. Hence it is that we are so often pressed to try

try our works, and to observe what fruit we bring forth, in order to the knowledge of our spiritual estate, 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. *Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteousness is righteous.* And *v.* 8. *He that committeth sin is of the devil.* Again, *v.* 10. *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.* You have many carnal persons apt to boast of the integrity of their hearts. It is true, *will they acknowledge*, they live in a course of sin, and neglect of duty, their lives are pestered with divers sorts of abominations: yea, but *will they plead*, our hearts are good, and we mean well, and we hope we may have grace within, as well as they who are more forward in Religion. *Why* mark it, *saith the Apostle*, this is a plain cheat you put upon your selves; If false teachers sooth you up in this conceit, do not hearken to them; they will but delude you to your destruction: For if your hearts be good, your lives will be answerable: If the grace of God be within you, it will guide your feet in the wayes of righteousness: you must prove your conversion, by the holiness of your conversation.

So that this Rule of advice will be useful on both hands. 1. To overturn the presumption of the wicked, when they boast of the sincerity of their hearts. 2. For relief to the godly, when they question the truth of their conversion. It is many times the ground of the hard thoughts they entertain concerning their spiritual estate, because they never felt those throws and pangs of the new birth, which some have felt: nor can they tell the time, when they were effectually called, and converted. *Why* remember *Sirs*, Although this change is visi-

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ble unto some in the first workings of it; yet grace is planted in others *imperceptibly*. And therefore the proof of it depends upon the fruit you bring forth, *Mat.* 3. 8, 9. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within your selves, we have* Abraham *to our father*; *q. d.* You must prove the truth of your profession of being the children of God, by walking as becometh his children. How will you make it appear, that you have the grace of repentance; unless your conversations be answerable thereunto? As the root of a tree is hid in the earth, and is not seen with the eye; but if you would know what sort the tree is of, you must look upon the fruit: so it is in spiritual things, The habits of grace themselves (*the root of the matter*) are the hidden man of the heart; they lie deep within, and sometimes their entrance is not discerned: and therefore you must examine by your works, *Gal.* 6. 4. *Let every man prove his own work*. And no wonder that we are required to judge our selves by this Rule; for according to our works Christ will judge us at the last day. When he cometh to gather all people before him, and to divide them into companies, according to their spiritual condition; such as are members of his body into one company, and such as are strangers to him into another; and to pass an irrepealable sentence upon them, he will proceed upon evidence drawn from their works, *Rom.* 2. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Who will render to every man according to his works. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil:*

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of the Jew *first, and also of the Gentile.* Rev. 20. 13. *And they were judged every man according to his works.*

This is *the third Rule of Direction*, That to prove your union with Christ, by your conversion; you must diligently observe and enquire into the holiness of your conversation; what respect you have to the commandments of God. For 1 *Joh.* 3. 24. *He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.* And 1 *Joh.* 2. 5. *Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby we know that we are in him.*

Direct. 4. In the examination of your wayes and works, as a proof of your conversion, and union with Christ thereupon, this must be carefully minded; *That it is not the external discharge of some particular duties, will evidence a sincere conversion unto God: but a diligent search must be made into the main bent of your spirits, as to the wayes of holiness; and the whole tenour of your conversations must be considered upon that account.*

It must be observed, whether you make religion your business; and if it be the great design you drive on, to study to please the Lord, and to be accepted of him. It is not the workings of your spirits in a fit of affection, when your hearts are warmed by the word, or you are under the call of some awakening providence, that will prove you to be converts indeed; but the general scope and tendency of your lives: when godliness is the *trade* that you follow, and holiness the *high way* wherein you travel. As the expression is, *Isa.* 35. 8, 9. *And a high way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the way-faring*

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men though fools shall not err therein. No Lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereupon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there. Mark it *Sirs*, Holiness is the *high way*, where the servants of Christ take their journey. They do not only, now and then, make an excursion into some acts of piety and godliness, when they are under convictions, *and the like*: But they spend their very life time in walking with God. As holiness is *a plain way*, wherein the meanest Christian may go on directly to heaven without danger of miscarrying: Though he be of never so low parts and endowments; yet if his design be to fear the Lord, and to be blessed in the enjoyment of him; God hath chalked out the way so clearly, that he that runs may observe it. And as it is *a safe way*, wherein the Lord hath undertaken for the protection of travellers, against all dangers, and evil occurrents: So it is *the great road* wherein all the redeemed ones travel, from one end of the week to the other.

My brethren, such as are Christians in good earnest do not take up a garb of Religion for the Sabbath, and then lay it aside the six dayes following: as men put on, and off, their best apparel: They do not put on a kind of seriousness, in spiritual exercises; and live as Atheists and worldlings in their secular negotiations and affairs: They do not enter upon the performance of some particular duties only, to stop the clamours of an awakened conscience; and when that turn is served, return to their vanity and wickedness: But they make the Lord their constant companion, and take holiness as a clew of thread, that runs through all their undertakings and concernments, *Zech.* 14. 20, 21. *In*

that

that day there shall be upon the bells of their horses, Holiness to the Lord: *and the pots in the Lords house shall be like the bowls before the Altar: yea every pot in* Jerusalem *and* Judah *shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts.* In that day] that is, when God doth pour out plentifully of the spirit of grace, and wash sinners in the fountain set open for sin and uncleanness; then they shall endeavour to be spiritual in the very common and ordinary actions of their lives, and to be holy in all manner of conversation. As it is not some particular acts of sin, into which a man falleth, through weakness, and the violence of temptations, that will prove the person offending to be wicked, and unconverted; but when he liveth in a course of sin, and any ungodliness is the way wherein he goeth: So it is not the performance of some particular duties of Religion, unto which a man is carried by the force of a natural conscience, will prove his conversion; but when holiness is *the high way* wherein he travelleth, and the very business which he prosecuteth. This was *Noah's* evidence, that he was righteous and perfect in his generation; He did not only obey the voice of the Lord in some particulars, but he *walked with God,* Gen. 6. 9. And *Enoch* had this testimony that he pleased God, for he walked with him for hundreds of years together; from one end of the year to the other. Compare *Heb.* 11. 5. with *Gen.* 5. 22.

Direct. 5. That obedience which will evidence that you are regenerated, and converted by the Spirit of Christ, and so knit unto him; *must not only be right for the matter wherein it doth consist, but rightly qualified also for the manner, how it is discharged and tendered unto the Lord.* It is not barely the

work done [*opus operatum*] but principally [*modus operandi*] *the manner of the performance, that will prove a principle of grace, to reside in the heart of that man or woman, by whom it is done. As the sinfulness of sin doth lie chiefly *in the manner* how it is committed; as when men sin wickedly and presumptuously against light and knowledge, and break through convictions to the perpetration of evil: So doth the excellency and evidencing vertue of the acts of obedience lie especially *in the manner*, how it is performed. An hypocrite may do the same external work which a believer doth, and which for the matter of it is good. Therefore the Lord doth expostulate with that sinful people, who trusted in their outward duties; concerning their defectiveness in the manner of the performance of them, *Isa.* 58. 3, 5. They had fasted and sought unto God; but, *Is it such a fast as I have chosen?* saith the Lord, *v.* 5. *Mark in Sin*, In the trial of your obedience to prove that you are sanctified, you must not only mind the *substance* of the work what is done, but likewise examine the *sucbness* of it, how it is done. Possibly thou prayest often, and readest the Scriptures frequently, and givest alms to the poor, and the like; and from thence art confident of thy being in the state of grace: But *man*, is it *so* praying as God requireth? And *such* a studying of the word, to which the blessing is annexed? Is it *such* a giving of alms, as hath the promise of acceptance? It is a good thing to run in the way of God's precepts: But do you so run that ye may obtain? 1 *Cor.* 9. 24.

* Bonum oritur ex causis integris: malum ex quolibet defectu.

This is *the fifth Rule of Direction*: That in the exami-

examination of your obedience, for the clearing up your conversion, and union with Christ; you must not only look into the matter what is done, but strictly enquire into the manner how it is done; and whether it be rightly qualified according to the purport and tenour of the Covenant of grace.

Direct. 6. For the right qualifying and modification of our obedience to God, that it may prove a certain evidence of conversion, and *consequently* of our union with Christ Jesus; *It must of necessity have these six properties; and each of them must be enquired after, in the business of self-examination.*

It must be { 1. *Spiritual* 2. *Universal* 3. *Evangelical* 4. *Sincere* 5. *Thriving* 6. *Stedfast* } obedience.

1. It must be *spiritual obedience*, answerable to the nature of that God whom we wait upon, and whose servants we are. His essence is spiritual, and such must our obedience to him be; if we will serve the Lord acceptably, and make it appear, that we are of the number of his peculiar people. Bodily exercise, and a meer external devotion, will strike a great stroke in making up the form of godliness; but the power of it consisteth in that which is spiritual, *Joh.* 4. 23. *The true worshippers shall worship the Father, in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.* These are the true worshippers, *that is*, such as are so in Gods account, whom he will graciously receive, and own in their performances. When people serve him in a bare external, bodily manner, he reckoneth them as

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his greatest enemies: their service is but a piece of dissimulation, which hath only the shadow of worship: For the substance lieth in what is spiritual: And *such the Father seeketh to worship him*; *i.e.* such worship he commandeth, and his soul is well pleased with. Although it seemeth to be spoken here with a peculiar reference to *instituted worship*: yet it holds strongly as to *natural worship* also; even of all the parts and particulars of his service: For the reason which is rendred, *v.* 24. is comprehensive of all, *Because God is a Spirit.* So that our obedience, if it prove us a chosen generation, whom God hath set apart for himself, must be spiritual: And that in a *threefold respect.*

In respect of the
1. *Principle*, from whence it floweth.
2. *Extent*, how far it reacheth.
3. *Subject*, whereon it is terminated.

1. *In respect of the principle, from whence it proceedeth.* It must be such obedience as cometh from the heart, and wherein the soul and spirit is ingaged. Not an honouring him with the lips, and drawing neer to him with the mouth, when the heart is removed far from him: Not a serving him only by a kind of compulsion, under some terrible apprehensions of the judgments of God: not in a slothful, careless, and lukewarm manner, as if Religion were a wearinesse to us, and we had no mind to our work: But when we serve him aright, our hearts must be ingaged to approach unto him, *Jer.* 30. 21, 22. we must be *fervent in spirit serving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11. And our inward parts must be employed in the works of holiness. When a man

mans tongue doth speak forth the praises of God, and his heart joyneth with him in the business: when his hands do act in the works of piety, and his spirit concurreth in the action, and carry him on thereunto; *this is to serve the Lord with the Spirit.* Although he calleth for the body also to be imployed in his service: (*as indeed he deserveth the whole man*) yet not as a picture, or image, without life and soul; but as animated by the heart, *Prov.* 23. 26. *My son, give me thine heart; and let thine eyes observe my wayes; q. d.* A slave will give me his hands, and feet, and the strength of his body; an hypocrite will offer up the outward man; but if thou be a son, I must have the heart, and spirit.

2. It must be spiritual obedience, *in respect of the extent of it, how far it reacheth.* Such as sets us in opposition against spiritual sins, as well as fleshly: such as causeth us to fight against secret pride, and envy, and earthlinesse, and unbelief, and malice, and double-mindedness, and the like; as well as to obstain from rotten communication, and gross outward pollutions. It must be such obedience as is exercised in spiritual duties; as meditation on the word of the Lord, and frequent contemplation of the excellencies of God, adoring his Majesty, and admiring his works, and setting the affections on things above; as well as in p'eading the cause of holiness, and openly walking in the profession of it. It must carry us to such works, as are performed in the secret recesses of the Spirit; and sets us a striving against such corruptions, as are forged and fabricated in the spirit, which no eye can observe, but God and our own consciences; 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Let us cleanse our selves from all the filthiness, both of the flesh, and spirit.* Rom. 8. 5. *They that are af-*

ter the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. Psal. 73. 1. *Truly God is good to* Israel, *even to such as are clean of heart.* See further, *Psal.* 24. 3, 4. *Mat.* 6. 21.

3. *In respect of the subject, whereon it is terminated.* It endeth in the further renewing and purifying the spirit, and getting more degrees of habitual grace into the heart. When we are not only contented to be kept free from the acts of sin, but do mourn and lament under the principle of sin, and labour to deaden that principle. When we do not think it enough to do much for God, but fain would have our spirits transformed, every day more and more, into the image of God. *Thus it will be, if you are converted.* If a carnal person resist the temptation, he thinks his work is done; and is apt to glory in himself, as if the whole business were dispatched: But a convert layeth the ax to the root of the tree; he followeth the corrupt stream to the poysonous fountain, whence it is derived; and nothing will satisfie him, but cleansing the fountain, and taking revenge upon his lusts, that lodge within him, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24. *Paul's* actual sins cause him to have an eye upon his heart, by which he was turned aside. *I see,* saith he, *another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity unto the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from this body of death?* This is the first qualification: It must be *spiritual obedience.*

2. If you would prove your conversion, and consequentially your union with Christ, by your obedience; It must be *universal obedience.* Not a partial, and restrictive serving of God; but a following

lowing him fully, as far as the whole circuit of holiness reacheth. As it is said of *Caleb*, Num. 14. 24. *He followed the Lord fully*; and that proved him to be a man of another spirit, and of a gracious temper indeed, sanctified by the holy Ghost; because his obedience was universal. There is a *threefold universality* must go to the right qualifying our obedience, that it may be evidential of a converted estate.

It must be *universal* in relation to the
1. *Agent*, or person obeying,
2. *Rule* of obedience,
3. *Times*, and *seasons* of the performance.

1. *In relation to the agent, or person obeying*: that is, when a man doth consecrate and devote his whole self, both soul and body, to the keeping of Gods commandments; and doth his will, *not only from the heart*, but *with the whole heart* and spirit. When there is a concentrication, and conjunction of all the powers and faculties of the whole person, in the service of the Lord: the *understanding* is apprehensive of the mind of God, and the *judgment* approveth the way of his precepts; the *affections* run out in earnest desires to do, and delight in doing the will of God; the *will* is in a posture of ready compliance therewith: the *conscience* stirreth up unto obedience, and the *members of the body* are instruments in the execution of what is enjoyned. Contrary to that *dividing heart*, which the Scripture condemneth; when the several faculties of the soul draw several *wayes*: The understanding, and judgment, and conscience are for God, and his wayes; but the will and the affections for sin, and the world, and such lying vanities: When persons

have *an heart*, *and an heart*; an heart for God; and an heart for *Belial*: they are not come to any settled determination, but their spirits halt between two opinions. *My brethren*, If you would prove that you are converted unto God, your hearts must be united to fear his name; and *all* that is within you, must be gathered together, to the observing of his Statutes, *Jer.* 29. 13. *Ye shall seek me and find me, when you search for me, with all your hearts.* And mark the words of *Samuel* to the men of *Israel*, when they lamented after the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 7. 2, 3. *And* Samuel *spake unto all the house of* Israel, saying, *If ye do return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods, and* Ashtaroth, *from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines.* As if he had said, Be not deceived, it is not some faint inclinations unto godliness, and a little lamentation after the Lord, that will give you an interest in his mercy: But if you would be accepted of him, you must espouse none other interest but his; you must carry on none other design co-ordinate with that of pleasing the Lord, and walking with him; if you are his servants *at all*, you must be his *altogether*; and give him your whole heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. *And the reason is apparent*; because, in sanctification, grace is poured out into the whole man, and the change wrought is an universal change: And it is not the actings of a part which will evidence a change in the whole; But when the whole man is set upon the wayes of God. This is the *perfect heart* which was a comfort to *Hezekiah*; when all the soul goeth together in the way to heaven, and there

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is no part lacking, *Isa.* 38. 3. *Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.*

2. It must be universal *in relation to the rule, or the particulars of obedience*: When there is an equal and uniform respect unto all the commandments of the Lord; and a readiness to be pressed upon any service, whether greater or lesser, with whatsoever difficulty it is attended, and whatsoever self-denial is required in the discharge of it. When a man's soul is drawn out in a detestation of every sin, and doth not live in the allowed omission, or neglect of any known duty; whether secret or publike, whether generally practised or despised by the generality. You read of *Herod*, that he heard *John Baptist*, and did many things; but this was no proof of a sound conversion; because in other things he fell short, * In some cases he did what was commanded, and in others he took liberty to trample upon the commandment, *Mark* 6. 20. And this is the furthest that carnal Professors go, They are as *Cakes not turned*, half-bak'd Christians, as it is said of *Ephraim*, *Hos.* 7. 8. As to the abandoning of some sins, and discharge of some duties, they bid fair for heaven: But as for other corruptions, by which they think they have their livelyhood, and that have a more than ordinary share in their affections, they will hold them fast; and shake hands with Religion when they come to difficult points of obedience; *and so discover their rottenness*. Thus *Jehu* bade fair for salvation, and yet fell short, 2 *King.* 10. 30, 31, He

* *Qui facit solummodo ea quæ vult facere, non* Dominicam *voluntatem implet, sed* suam. Salvian.

He destroyed *Baal* out of *Israel*, and did to the house of *Ahab* according to all that was in God's heart: *Howbeit, from the sins of* Jeroboam *he departed not*: he thought those sins were so interwoven with his secular interest, that he could not keep the Kingdom without them: That, *no calves at* Dan *and* Bethel, *and no king in Israel.* But now, when a person can say in uprightness, that his heart standeth in awe of the whole Word of God; and whatever he findeth with the stamp of a divine precept upon it, he is willing to submit to; and through the assistance of the Spirit will close with it, be it never so contrary to flesh and bloud, though it run directly cross to his worldly interest, and cost him never so much ignominy, and reproach from the wicked, though it expose him to never so many troubles and hardships; here is that obedience in the life which will evidence grace in the heart, *Psal.* 119. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments. i. e.* Then it will appear that my profession is sound, and my hopes well bottomed, and such as will not deceive me: then I shall not be put to confusion at the day of accounts, nor be frustrated and disappointed in my expectations of glory; when I have this testimony to produce that I am a servant of God, because I esteem all his precepts, in every thing, to be right, and have a conscientious regard unto them all.

3. It must be *universal* obedience, *in relation to the times and seasons of the performance of it.* Psal. 106. 3. *Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doth righteousness at all times.* Not, as some Professors, whose Religion is modelled, according to

to the providences they are under, and the company which they meet and converse with. When godliness is in esteem and credit in the world, they will be clothed in that dress, and none shall be more forward in religious duties and exercises: But when it is discountenanced, and under a cloud, then their course is changed. They row their boat as the tide runneth, backward or forward; and hoise up their sails according as the wind bloweth. If they fall into a religious family, and amongst godly company, there they will approve and commend the wayes of God; and if their lot fall amongst vain and profane persons, they will be wanton, and vain, and profane, and scurrilous as the rest: *They will do* (like travellers) *as the rest of the company doth.* But *Sirs*, If a man be gracious indeed, it will settle his spirit upon godliness at all seasons, and in whatsoever society. If he live in *Sodom*, he will be so far from saying a confederacy with them in their wickedness, that *in seeing and hearing, he will vex his righteous soul, from day to day, with their unlawful deeds*, 2 Pet. 2. 8. Though he dwell in *Ahabs* family, yet he will *fear the Lord greatly*, 1 *Kings* 18. 3. He will own the Lord Christ for his Master in the face of all the world; and speak of his testimonies even before Kings, and not be ashamed, *Psal.* 119. 46. This is the *second qualification*: It must be *universal* obedience.

3. That obedience which will evidence your conversion, and consequently your union with Christ, must be *evangelical obedience*. Such as is suitable to the Covenant of grace, into which believers are entred; a conversation answerable to the dispensation of the Gospel, *Phil.* 1. 27. For, as there is a *slavish fear of God* in the heart; so there is

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a *legal serving of God* in the practise; which will no way contribute to the proof of your being ingraffed into Christ. That which is evidential thereof, must be such obedience as becometh the Gospel of Christ: when you serve the Lord *evangelically*, in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter: as the distinction is given us, *Rom. 7. 6.*

Qu. But *when is our obedience evangelical?* I answer, It mainly consists in *four things.*

1. When we are active and vigorous, in doing all that we can for God, *and then account it as nothing, to gain us acceptation with the Lord.* When we are serviceable, in our places and duties, to advance the honour of Jesus Christ, indeavouring to the uttermost the promotion of his interest; and then lay all that we have done at his feet; expecting our acceptance, & reward, purely upon the account of his bloud. When we labour to be intent upon the works of personal righteousness; and then underwrite with our hearts, *That we are unprofitable servants*, and lay the whole stress of our salvation upon the righteousness of the Lord Jesus. This is Gospel-service, when we lay all our sacrifices upon the *Gospel-altar*, that they may be sanctified thereby: and place no manner of confidence in what is done *by us*; but in the obedience and sufferings of Christ *for us*, *Phil. 3. 3. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* As if he had said, We labour to serve God in the purest manner, and offer up unto him the best that we have; but then we dare not put the least stress upon it, but all our confidence is in Christ; it is of him we boast, and not of our holiness: We give all diligence in

point of performance, but are nothing in our selves *in point of dependance*: And *we are the circumcision*, we are *Israelites* indeed, who have our hearts circumcised. A legal frame of spirit goeth to God in duty, and then expects a blessing for his duties sake: and thus a sinner may toyl all his life time in a round of duty, and be very far from the kingdom of God. Then we obey *evangelically*, when we do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, *Col.* 3. 17.

2. Then is our obedience Gospel-service indeed, *when it is performed in Gospel strength*; *i. e.* not by our own abilities, but by vertue derived from Christ, and in an humble dependance upon the assistance of his Spirit. That is a legal way of obedience, when a person brings forth fruit unto himself, and when he acts therein from himself: When he goeth in his own might, and power, to grapple with sin, and strive against temptations, and to keep the Law of God. But a Believer is *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*: and here is the evidence of a sincere convert, *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye live after the flesh, you shall die: but if ye, through the spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* Mark it, It is not said, if you make resolutions against sin, and set against the workings of corruption: But if you mortifie them *through the spirit*; then it is a sign you are quickned and made alive by the holy Ghost, and that you shall live for ever in the presence of God.

3. Evangelical obedience is that *which is according to the evangelical pattern, viz.* the life of Christ. When a Christian doth study to be a follower of him, and to tread in his steps, and to imitate the

Lord

Lord Jesus, by endeavouring to write after the copy which he hath set before us, in doing and suffering the will of God. This is the obedience which will evidence our union with him, and interest in him, 1 Joh. 2. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.* He that saith he is in him] *that is*, He that saith so truly, and as the matter is in reality: He that would not appear, to be a lyar in what he pretendeth to, and to boast of what he hath no saving interest in; must walk according to our Saviour's example.

4. Evangelical obedience is that *which is tendered upon evangelical motives, and considerations.* When we are diligent and industrious in the service of God, because our hearts are drawn forth in love towards him; and we are sensible of his goodness in sending his only begotten Son, to die in the behalf of lost sinners; and in making known the mystery of Christ unto us, and giving us promises of salvation through him. * For although it is not only permissively lawful for a believer, but also a duty incumbent upon him, to make use of the consideration of the wrath of God, to quicken him in the wayes of holiness, *Luke* 12.5. Yet he doth not serve the Lord *meerly* out of fear of his wrath: But the love of God doth constrain him, and his affections towards God are a forcible restraint to keep him from displeasing the Lord, who hath been so gracious unto him, *Hos.* 3. 5. *They shall fear the Lord, and his goodness in the latter dayes. i.e.* Upon this very account they shall be cautious not to sin against him, because he hath dealt so bountifully with

* *Amor meus est pondus meum. Ex. ferror quocunque feror. Aug.*

with them. This is the *third qualification*, it must be *evangelical* obedience.

4. If you would prove your conversion and union with Christ, by the holiness of your conversation and new obedience; you must look to it that it be *sincere obedience*; done in the singleness and godly simplicity of your hearts. You must serve the Lord, as in the sight of the Lord; and with a pure eye of respect unto the advancement of his glory; and in order to your blessedness in the enjoyment of him, and communion with him. For in those two things doth consist much of the nature of sincerity. 1. *In studying to approve our selves in the sight of God.* So the Apostle seemeth to explain it, 2 Cor. 2. 17. *As of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.* 2. *In serving the Lord for himself. My meaning is this*; Then is a Christian sincere in his obedience, when he is not acted therein by fleshly wisdom, nor doth make Religion subservient to any carnal ends: But he hath a single eye of regard to the glory of God, the maintaining fellowship with him, and the securing his own interest in the Lord, as a portion for his soul. When he is carried on to the works of holiness, by spiritual arguments: he doth that which is commanded, out of respect to the commandment; or [*eo nomine*] for that very reason, because it is the commandment of the Lord, and his heart stands in awe of it. This alone is to serve the Lord in obedience to his will. Else, if you set upon a course of Religion for any secular advantage that cometh by it, you do but serve your selves by Religion. As it is said of the Schismaticks, *Rom.* 16. 18. *They that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly.* They pretended Christ, but designed them-

themselves. And so do hypocrites of all sorts; they serve not God by their works of piety, but their own profit and advancement in the word; *they serve their own credit and reputation, and the furtherance of some carnal interest: or perhaps they may serve their very lusts, and make provision for them, by the duties of Religion. So the *whore* in the *Proverbs*, Chap. 7. 14, 15. She paid her vows, and offered peace-offerings, that she might purchase a license to sin more freely. *Thus multitudes of people debase Religion:* They go on in a constant road of outward performances, that at other times they may take the greater liberty, and sin with lesser disturbance in their spirits. But now a sincere Christian serves the Lord himself, in all the parts of his obedience. As he is spiritual in the discharge of his work; so the reasons and motives are spiritual, whereby he is stirred up unto the discharge of it.

And here is a main ground of the universality of a believers obedience; because spiritual reasons are comprehensive of the whole will of God, whereas carnal motives and arguments have but a partial influence. *A little to clear it by instances.* If you avoid sin, because of the shame of the world; that will only help to preserve you from open wickedness; but will have no influence against secret pollutions, which the world cannot observe: If you perform duty to please a party, or to get some temporal benefit; *that* will only ingage you in the practise of such duties as are countenanced by them, and are pleasing in their eye; but will no way prevail as to the practise of such as are contemned and despised,

* These are χρεσιμποροι and χρεσοκαπηλοι *Christ-merchants and Christ-hucksters*, as one calls them.

despised. But *now* if you obey the will of God, because it is his will; *That* will enforce an obedience to all* that he hath injoyned, *Psal.* 119. 101. If you abstain from sin, because God observeth it; this consideration will fence against all sin whatsoever, *Job* 31. 1, 4. If you walk in wayes of holiness, that you may have fellowship with God, and glorifie his name, and be inabled to give up a comfortable account unto him; these inducements will have an influence into the right ordering of all the particulars of your demeanour, *Eccl.* 12. *v.* 14. And here is the conversation, that will prove the work of regeneration; and minister joy thereupon; *When in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world,* 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. When we do not *truck* with Religion, nor make it a *stalking-horse* in subordination to any base or corrupt ends: But what we do, is done in a measure, in a singleness of spirit, and in the integrity of our hearts; as mainly indeavouring therein to to be accepted of God.

* *A quatenus ad de omni valet consequentia.*

This is the *fourth property* of evidential obedience; It must be *sincere.*

5. It must be *thriving obedience*, and of an increasing nature: for sanctifying grace is of a thriving nature. So that such as are holy indeed, will be still pressing after further degrees of holiness; and they that live through the Spirit, will endeavour to have life more abundantly: they will be going forwards unto perfection; at least in vehement desires, and sollicitous and earnest indeavours after it. *Besides*, there is such sweetness and excellency in communion with God, that whosoever

 tasteth

tastethit, cannot but be longing and reaching after more and more, till he come to full fruition and enjoyment, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, 3. *As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* As new born babes] *q. d.* This is the property of all that are regenerate; the picture of an infant doth not grow, but a living child doth; and there is as natural and direct a tendancy in a child of God towards increase in holiness, as there is in a new born child to the breast, that he may grow in strength and stature. And this you will labour after, *if so be that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* That *taste* will set an edge upon your desires, and cause you to hunger and thirst with greater eagerness after more. *When persons can sit down contented with the least measures of holiness, and think, if they have but grace in the smallest degree, so much as will give them an interest in God, and bring them safely to heaven, *they will not care for more*; but there they will take up their rest, and live at ease, without troubling themselves to aspire after further degrees: It is a shrewd sign that they are utterly strangers to the workings of grace in the heart. For did they but once taste the spiritual deliciousness of fellowship with the most High, it would fill them with an insatiable appetite after greater attainments; they would be ever pressing towards the mark, and labouring to proceed from strength to strength, til they should appear in *Sion* before the Lord: They would study to augment their faith till it came to sight; and to pro-

*Sitis duplex est. 1. *Una totalis indigentia*, Isa. 6. 5, 13. 2. *Alterâ fruitionis & complacentiæ partialis*: *Illa tollitur per gratiæ participationem*; *hac crescit indies dum sumus in via, per fidem ambulantes & non per aspectum.* Ames. Coron.

promote their hopes, till they were turned into fruition; and to blow up the smoaking flax of their love, till it were kindled in a pure, spiritual, unmixed flame: They would think they never had grace enough, till it were swallowed up in glory; not that they were sufficiently holy, till made perfect in holiness, *Job* 17. 9. *He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.* Prov. 4. 18. *The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* Here is that sort of obedience, which will evidence your ingrafture into Christ: When you are freed from sin, so as to be daily striving after greater freedom, and getting more ground upon your corruptions: When you are not only active for God; but still aspiring after further activity, and delight in doing the will of God, and the rendring your selves more serviceable unto him. For although a true Believer doth not alwayes thrive *sensibly*, and *perceptibly*; but may rather seem in his own apprehensions to decay and go backward; nor doth he at all times thrive *really*: yet it is the main bent of his spirit; and the earnest breathings of his soul are, that he may make a continued progress in the course of godliness: He never resteth satisfied with any measures attained, but is still endeavouring after more. As he blesseth God for the least dram of grace conferred upon him, so he is ambitious to get into the *uppermost form of Christs Scholars.* And here is the note of oneness with Christ. For, *Joh* 15. 2. *Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

6. It must be *stedfast obedience*, and continued unto the end: When a soul doth give up himself

to the Lord, to be his servant perpetually and everlastingly, without limitation of time: When he is fully determined through the assistance of the Spirit, that whatever comes of it, this God he will serve, and the advancement of his glory he will carry on, and the way of holiness he will travel in, and through grace nothing shall divert him from his course. When a mans ear is *bored*, so as to serve the Lord for ever: as the expression of Christ is, *Psal.* 40. 6. *Mine ear hast thou opened*, or mine ear hast thou *bored*. It is in allusion (*as some think*) to the ceremonial Law, in the case of servants, * *Exod.* 21. 5, 6. *If the servant shall say plainly, I love my Master, my wife and my children, I will not go out free: Then his Master shall bring him unto the Judges, he shall also bring him to the door, or to the door post; and his Master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever.* So Christ gave up himself to serve the Lord for ever; *He was not rebellious, neither did he turn back.* And thus must a Believer do, if he will prove that he is in Christ: He must have his *ear bored* to serve the Lord for ever. It *saying he shall say*, (as the *Hebrew* phrase is *) If he shall speak it *truly* and *unfeignedly*, in the very inwards of his soul; If his heart shall subscribe unto it; *I love my Master, I will not go free*: I love the Lord,

* *Non alicuium omnino quod quidem à nostris putant, videri respexisse* Davidem *ad consuetudinem olim usitatam in populo* Hebræo, *ut servo sponte permanenti in servitute, nec admittere volenti libertatem, quæ septimo quoque anno servis offerebatur, auris subula perforaretur. Ac dicere voluisse, habebis me perpetuam tibi addictum servum, &c.* Sim. de Muis. in loc.

* וְאִם־אָמוֹר יֹאמַר
Si dicendo dixerit.

Lord, and the desire of my soul is towards him, I will serve him perpetually, and abide in his family for ever; and accordingly doth perform it: Here is such obedience and service as will evidence union with Jesus Christ, *Heb.* 3. 6. *Whose house are we,* [*i.e.* then it is clear and evident, that we are Christs house and temple, that he dwelleth in us, and we have fellowship with him] *if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoycing of the hope firm unto the end.*

So much for the *sixth Rule of direction*, To shew you how your obedience must be qualified, that it may be produced as a proof of your conversion, and consequentially of your union with Jesus Christ.

Direct. 7. This examination of your selves, touching your holiness and new obedience, as the evidence of your regeneration, and union with Christ thereupon; *if it be done successfully, and effectually, must be set upon solemnly; with the best intention of spirit.* It is not enough to take a *transient view* of our selves, and to pass over *cursorily*, in an observation of our own souls: But if we would perform this work to purpose, we must *sit down*, and consider, how the case stands with us. We must set a covenient time apart, particularly to this end of entring into a serious debate with our selves; and making a narrow scrutinity into the frame of our hearts, and the tenour of our conversations. As one that would buy an house, or a tenement, doth not only cast a glance upon it, as he rideth by the way; *that* is not enough to give him a full knowledge of it: But he will take a day on purpose to view it; and openeth the doors, and entereth into the house, and passeth from one room to another,

and from one corner to another: So, if we would get a clear knowledg of our spiritual estate; we must not think it enough to take a general view of our selves, (*obiter*, and *by the by*) but we must set time apart, and gather our spirits together, to look wistly into every corner; we must take particulars asunder, and search heedfully and intentively into each of them. *And the reason of it is very apparent*, Because the heart of man is deep; and except it be searched throughly, we shall never dive into the bottom or entrals of it, *Psal.* 64. 6. The spirit of fallen man, is exceedingly treacherous, and deceitful, *Jer.* 17. 9. So that unless we trace it narrowly in all its steps, and follow after it in to all its subterfuges, and hiding places; it will escape our cognizance; and be apt to impose upon us in the business of salvation. It is to be feared that many enter slightly upon the work of self-examination, and quickly slubber it over in a carless and superficial manner: and that is the very reason why they never bring matters to an issue, or determinate conclusion in this case. For it is a work to be performed with the greatest cautelousness, diligence, and deliberation: and with earnest prayer to the Lord, that he may discover to us those intricacies and labyrinths, wherein our guilful spirits are apt to hide themselves. This is *the seventh Rule of Advice.*

Direct. 8. Mind this word of counsel *in the last place*; That if a person upon the most serious and deliberate examination of himself be still left in the dark, as to his union with Christ, for want of clear evidences of his conversion; *The way to make sure work in this behalf, and to put the matter out of question, is to put forth immediately fresh acts of faith*

upon

upon the righteousness of Christ for salvation; to renew his repentance as to the evil of sin; to make a fresh surrender of himself into the hands of God, upon the terms of the Covenant of grace; and to enter presently upon the course of new obedience. *

* *Constitutia meritò perturbata, hac unica est ratio pacandæ: Si, qui sic afficiunt adduti possit in illam statum per veram fidem & resipiscentiam, ac assumpto illico, mi illius quo turbatur fak, meritò incipiat esse falsa & jure negetur.* Ames. Theol. de conse.

These *Sirs*, are those acts, which the principle of regeneration doth first exert, and put forth, when it is planted into the soul: and these spiritual acts are often reiterated and repeated, by the souls of such as are converted. So that if you were before effectually called, these will be the renewings of your conversion: and if you were formerly unconverted, yet hereby it will be evident that you continue such no longer: But that, *through grace*, now the work is wrought: These being the immediate products of the grace of conversion. I will a little open *this word of Advice*, in relation to each of the particulars asunder.

1. *Act your faith* [*afresh*] *upon the Lord Christ, and his righteousness.* Endeavour in the sense of the greatness of the evil of your sins, and apprehension of the insupportableness of the wrath of God, deserved by sin; in the due acknowledgment of the justice of God that must be satisfied, and the insufficiency of all your personal qualifications and obedience to give satisfaction thereunto; to cast your selves upon Christ's righteousness, to put your selves for redemption into his hands, and to

accept him for your Saviour, upon the terms of the Gospel. *This is to believe in Jesus*; and if it be done *now* in sincerity and truth, it will be a comfortable evidence, that either you were formerly united unto Christ, or else that at the present the knot is tyed betwixt him, and your souls. See the words of our Saviour, *Joh.* 12.46. *I am come as a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness.* Only take the advice with this *proviso*; See to it that you do not mistake in the nature of faith: that you do not take a *dead faith*, for *a living*: nor an hypocritical counterfeit faith, for the faith of God's elect. And then if you believe indeed, the putting forth that principle into exercise, will be as a present evidence that you are gotten into Christ, and have a right to the favour of God through his bloud.

2. To put the matter out of question, touching your conversion, and union with Jesus Christ; *Renew your repentance, as to the evil of sin.* Labour to get such a sight of your transgressions committed against the Lord, as may fill you with godly sorrow for them: and to be so deeply affected with your own filthiness and pollutions, that you may loath your selves, and lie down in your shame, upon the account of that filthiness: Upon taste of the bitterness of your departings from God, and the destructive nature of your iniquities, let your hearts be set in hatred of them, and cast them away from you with utter detestation, and abhorrence, never to come neer you again, as to any reconcilement with them: Especially abhor those iniquities which have mostly prevailed over you, say unto your lusts, *get ye hence, what have I to do any more*

with

with you? You have ruined my soul, and I will never yield subjection to you further. If I have served you hitherto, through Gods assistance I will do it no longer. This, *my brethren*, is repentance according to the Scriptures. And if your hearts speak these things in uprightness, it will help to demonstrate that you have the grace of repentance, and so shall never come into condemnation. Only take heed that your hearts do not dissemble and flatter in this work, *Jer.* 31. 19. *After I was turned, I repented; and after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh.* First *Ephraim* was made partaker of the grace of conversion, and then he doth exercise that grace in a sincere repentance. Indeed *a legal repentance* may be without grace in the heart; but this *evangelical repentance* is the product of grace and an evidence thereof. See 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. *Luke* 15. 7, 10.

3. To prove that you are converted. *Make a fresh surrender of your selves into the hands of God, upon the articles of the Covenant of grace.* Resign up your selves *anew* unto the most High; make choice of him for your only portion, set your affections upon him as the chiefest good, and give up your selves unreservedly to be his servants, and to be wholly at his disposal. That is another spiritual act which the principle of regeneration doth immediately put forth, when it is infused into the soul; and if you perform it in the integrity of your hearts, it will be an evidence that you are partakers of that principle; *Isa.* 44. 3, 5. *I will pour out water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour out my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring.* And then it followeth, v. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords: and another shall call himself by the name of* Jacob: *and another shall subscribe*

with

with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Mark it, Assoon as the Spirit of God is put into the soul, that soul doth give up himself unto God, and list himself amongst his followers. So that as a present proof of your having the spirit of conversion, take your hearts along with you, and go to the Lord, and make a full and fresh resignation of them, and of your whole selves into his hands. *Take with you words and go unto the Lord*, as it is elsewhere expressed. *My meaning is this.* (1.) Take with you words of *election* and *choice*; say unto him, O Lord, I now take thee to be my God and my Master, I will henceforward make thee my refuge and fortress, I will set my heart upon thee as my only happiness, and exceeding great reward: If I have stood it out formerly against the tenders of grace, I will stand out no more: If I have followed after lying vanities, I will follow them no longer: Now I make choice of the Lord, Behold I come unto thee, for thou art my God, and I abandon all things that stand in competition with thee. This sort of words you shall meet with, *Jer.* 3. 22, 23. (2.) Take with you words of *surrender*, and *say unto God*, O Lord, here I am to dedicate my self, and my strength, and my time, and my talents, to the doing of thy will, and the advancement of thy glory: If hitherto I have served divers lusts and pleasures, now I will serve my God, even him only: If I have for the former part of my life trampled upon thy commandments; now I will devote my self wholly to thy fear, and to the keeping thy statutes, *Psal.* 119. 38. *Psal.* 116. 16. And (3.) Take with you words of *prayer and supplication*, and *say unto him*, Lord, Receive me graciously, and love me freely, and admit me

me again into thy service; It is true, that I am altogether unworthy to have the least regard from the God of heaven; but I come unto thee through Christ, who is worthy. I beseech thee mercifully to enrol me amongst the number of thy peculiar people, *Hos* 14. 1, 2. And *my brethren*, if you do thus unfeignedly give up your selves unto God, it will be a present testimony that you are alive from the dead, that you are quickned by the holy Ghost, *Rom.* 6. 13.

4. To put this matter of your conversion out of question, *Make an immediate entrance upon a course of new obedience.* Set now upon cleansing your selves further from all sorts of filthiness, and actually perform those duties, which in your places and stations are to be performed; and therein study to approve your selves unto God. If thine heart be privy to any corruption, that hath been countenanced; let it be wholly forsaken, and the occasions of sin avoided. If any wicked companion hath had too much of thy converse and intimacy, now break off society with him. If any duty hath been omitted, let it be henceforward discharged; if slightly performed, let it be done in an humble, serious, and spiritual manner. Hereby it will appear that you gave up your selves to be the Lord's in sincerity: that you do not complement only with him, as many Professors do, who are often professing and protesting to the Lord that they are his servants, but still they follow the imaginations of their own hearts. Then is the resignment of our selves unto the Almighty done *in truth*, when it doth ingage us presently to walk *in the truth*. *I have sworn* (saith *David*) *and I will perform it, that I will*

will keep thy righteous judgments, Psal. 119.106. And such is the language of a true Convert; *I am the Lord's, and now I will demean my self as being his: I have given my self to the most High, and now I will be no more at my own disposal: I have subscribed unto the Lord, and accordingly I am doing his work.* So that here is *the last word of advice*, for the present proof of your conversion, and union with Christ thereupon: *Yield up your selves unto the Lord, and serve the Lord your God*, 2 Chron. 30. 8. Make a present entrance, in the strength of the Spirit, upon all the wayes of holiness; and let that be your constant exercise, from henceforth unto the end.

Thus I have finished *the second use of the point*, by way of *examination* and *trial*.

CHAP. XII.

Exhortations grounded upon the doctrine of Union with Christ. To the unregenerate and Christless. To Believers. To all.

3. THe last Use of this doctrine is for *Exhortation*; wherein I will study to be more succinct and concise: addressing my self, in what I have to deliver under this head, unto you *my brethren* under a threefold consideration.

I shall

I shall speak unto
1. *The unregenerate*, who are strangers to Christ.
2. *Believers*, who are through grace ingrafted into Christ.
3. *All of you*, both of the one sort, and of the other.

1. *To the wicked, and unregenerate*; who are strangers unto Christ, and that in a *twofold respect*.

In respect to
1. *Believers*.
2. *The wicked themselves*.

1. To the unregenerate and ungodly, in reference to Believers. *Take heed that you be not found opposers of them in any regard whatsoever.* Remember, they are knit to the Son of God, and what you do against them he takes it as done against himself, whose members they are: And how will you stand before Christ, at his tribunal, if now you despise and set against his servants; who are not only dear to him, but are in him? As *Abner* said to *Assahel*, 2 *Sam.* 2. 22. *Turn thee aside from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? How then should I hold up my face to* Joab *thy brother?* So should you bethink your selves, How shall I lift up my face to Christ, if I wrong his followers? How will the Lord Jesus take it at my hands? May not I certainly expect that he will avenge their quarrel upon me, in my destruction? For they are one with him; *so that he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye, Zech.* 2. 8. Christ hath a tender regard unto them, and is sensible of the smallest injury that is done unto them; as we are of the least blow or prick upon the apple of the eye. *Sirs*, It is the sorriest office imaginable, to be a Persecutor of the Saints: it is the worst imployment upon earth,

to

to set against believers: for they are one with Christ, and so in effect it is to fight against him.

*And therefore let my counsel be acceptable, in the words of *Gamaliel*, Act. 5. 38, 39. *Refrain from these men, and let them alone*; if you love your souls, do not meddle with them to their hurt; do not harbour so much as an hard thought against them; for therein you will be found fighters against God; you will be found enemies to the Son of God, for they are one with him. And is it not a dangerous thing to set against Christ? If he plead against you, who shall maintain your cause before the Lord? If thou make him thine adversary, who shall be thy friend? If Christ sentence thee to hell, for opposing his members; who shall be able to save thee from thence? If you do but touch the Saints to their hurt, you will burn your fingers by it; *nay*, you will ruine your souls for ever, without a speedy repentance; for they are one with Jesus.

** Doleamus necesse est quod nulla civitas impuna laturâ sit sanguinis nostri effusionem. Possumus æquè & exitus quærendam præsidium tibi proponere, qui in fine vitæ suæ recedesi sunt deliquisse quod vexassent Christianos, Sed qui videntur sibi impunè intulisse, venient in diem divini judicii. Non te terremus qui nec timemus, sed velim ut omnes salvos fatere possimus, metenda Mà Θεομαχεῖν.* Tert. ad Scap.

This *Exhortation* may fitly be branched forth, into *four particulars*.

1. *Do not scandalize, or offend the servants of God.* See to it, that you be not guilty of laying stumbling blocks in their way. Be careful, what in you lieth, that you do not grieve their spirits, nor sadden their hearts, by your disorderly walking. But especially take heed that you lay none occasions of fal-

ling

ling in their way, (which is the offence that the holy Ghost * mostly warneth against) for they are knit to Christ. It is the very argument pressed for prevention of scandals, 1 *Cor.* 8. *v.* 9, 12. *Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak.* For as it followeth, *v.* 12. *When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.* How against him? *Why*, not only against the word and commandment of Christ, which is hereby contemned; *so all sins are against him*: not only against the work of Christ, which you hereby oppose; (Christs work is to save these weak Christians, and what in you lieth, by your scandals you put an obstacle in the way of their salvation:) But you sin especially against Christ, because they are his members, knit unto him, and made one with him. So that, *my brethren*, the matter of scandalizing and offending the meanest of the Saints of the most High; is not of such trivial concernment, as many persons would make it. When they are pressed with an argument drawn from this *Topick* of offending the servants of God, they turn it off with a wet finger, as if it were a matter hardly worth the mentioning. But *Sirs*, is it nothing to sin against Christ, the Mediator? Is it nothing to destroy those for whom he died, and who are in him? sure I am, that our Saviour himself putteth much weight upon it, and reckons it amongst the sins that he will severely punish, *Mat.* 18. 6. *Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him*

* *Illud scandalum dicitur ubi rectò itinere ambulanti detrectio aliqua infertur ad peccandum.* Orig.

that

that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea.

2. *Do not reproach or speak evil of the people of God.* Dare not to vent a contemptuous, or malicious word against them; for they are one with Christ; and so whatsoever is spoken against them, doth not only reflect upon him, but is accounted as spoken against him. *Jude* 15. *Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly amongst them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* How do they speak against him? *Not only* when they openly blaspheme the name of Christ, and utter despiteful words against the person of Christ: But when they reproach his people, and vent their hatred in evil words against his Saints, This is reckoned as done against Christ, because of their near relation unto him, and union with him. Commonly their hard speeches are immediately directed against Believers, Many that pretend a love to Christ, or that will not be so profane as to speak reproachfully of him, will be often lashing at his followers, and taking all advantages to smite them with the tongue, and to cast dirt upon their profession. But *mark it Sirs*, how little soever you think of it, this is to strike at Christ, and to wound him through their loyns: And in the day of accounts, he will convince you of these hard speeches; he will make you to know, to your eternal sorrow, what an evil it was thus to wrong his people. For it is *for the Son of mans sake* that the godly are reproached, and their name is cast out as evil: And *besides*, he dwelleth in them, and they

they are one with him, *Luk. 6. 22.* So that you should be afraid to speak evil of them. As the Lord said to *Aaron* and *Miriam*, Num. 12.8. *Wherefore were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?* *q. d.* He is my servant, one of my family, and what he doth is in my name; I the Lord employ him in the work that he hath undertaken; and could you imagine that I would not take his part? or that I would not stand up in his vindication and defence? So may the Lord Jesus say to you in this respect: This people, whom you despise and trample upon, are my people; you account them as the dung of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things, and at every turn are ready to cast dirt in their faces; But they are of my retinue, they belong unto me, nay they are *mystically one with me*: and could you think I would not rise up in their behalf? Wherefore were you not afraid, to speak a word against them? you do thereby cast dishonour upon Christ, and load him with your reproaches, *for they are his members.*

3. *Have not the least hand in persecuting, or actually opposing the people of God.* Do not hinder their progress in the wayes of holiness, not be a means to bring them into sufferings, upon that account. *Remember*, They are one with Christ the Saviour; and if he shut the door of heaven against you, who can open it for your admittance? *He hath the key of* David, *that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.* They are united to Christ, the *Judge*; and what favour can you expect at his hands, if you set your selves in defiance against him? But *you will say*, we do not meddle with Christ; far be it from us to act in the least against him: We only punish, and set against, a company

of inconsiderable people, that walk in a way contrary to the rest of the world; who have a path by themselves, and would be deemed more holy than their neighbours: *If Christ were upon earth, we would honour and serve him.* But *Sirs*, be not deceived, God is not mocked: If you hate believers for their holiness, you would much more have hated Jesus Christ, whose holiness is unspeakably more than theirs; and you would persecute him, if he were within your reach: for he walked more precilely and strictly than any of the poor Christians, whom you oppose; and in a far greater contradiction to the world. *Besides*, what you do against them, is interpreted as done against Christ himself; because they are one with him, *Act. 9. 4, 5. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.* *Saul* thought he had only hunted the poor Saints at *Damascus*, a company of humorous people, that would not conform to the customs and traditions of the Elders; a few despicable persons, who were contemned on every hand: But he is arraigned as an enemy to Christ, and found guilty of persecuting the Lord Jesus. When he breathed out threatnings and slaughters against the Disciples of the Lord, it is accounted as if he had sought the destruction of Christ himself: as if his rage and madness had been directly bent against the Son of God. *Why persecutest thou me? q.d.* I esteem their affliction, as if I were afflicted; and their sufferings, as if my self suffered: And what reason hast thou to set thus furiously against me? Is this my requital for coming down from heaven, to open a door of salvation for lost sinners? Is it not the greatest folly in the world, to provoke me to wrath,

wrath, who am able to break thee in pieces like a potters vessel? Think of it *Saul* (*as if Christ had said*) it is a dangerous way which thou art in; it is a miserable imployment thou spendest thy pains about; *thou art but kicking against the pricks*, contending with one * that is too strong for thee; for it is Jesus whom thou persecutest.

* *Sententia est proverbialis & bobus aut equis sumpta: quidam stimulis pungunturi calcitrando nihil proficiunt, nisi quod stimulos ultius infixit malum duplicant.*

4. *Do not neglect to give believers what help and furtherance you can, in their pilgrimage.* Be ready to shew them any kindness that lieth in your way to shew them, and to contribute what relief and assistance soever you are able to minister, upon any occasion; for they are united unto Christ, intimately acquainted with him, and neerly related to him. So that the Lord Jesus will take it kindly at your hands whatever friendship you shew to his people. Art thou a *Lawyer*? Plead their cause. Art thou a *Magistrate*? Protect their persons, against the Sons of violence; Break the jaws of the wicked, and pluck the spoil out of their teeth. Art thou a *private person*, and hearest the godly traduced, and their profession bespatteted? Endeavour to vindicate them, and what in thee lieth, to clear up their innocency. Art thou a man whom God hath intrusted with wealth and riches? Why, then as thou hast opportunity, *do good to all, but especially to the houshold of faith*: For they are members of Christ, and thou shalt in no wise lose thy reward. Christ hath all the blessings in the world put into his hands to distribute, and in the distribution of his *doles of bounty*, be sure

he will not forget such as have shewed kindness to his servants; he will recompence them to the full; the smallest courtesie done to the Saints shall not be forgotten, *Mark* 9.41. *Whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.* He hath promised to reward those that feed their enemies, when they are hungry, and give them water to drink, when they are thirsty; and will he not much more reward such as relieve and shelter his own Saints and people? *Prov.* 25.21,22. They are united to him; what kindness is shewed unto them, is reckoned as if it were shewed to our Lord Jesus Christ.

A little to press home these *Exhortations*, let me intreat you to consider these *four moving considerations.*

Cons. 1. Holy men and women who study to please the Lord, and to walk in integrity before him, *are the very pillars of a Nation, by which it is upheld.* They are the main props and supporters of the places where they live, & of the families wherein they dwell. It is for their sakes, that mercies are continued unto a people, or kingdom; and judgments are kept off from falling down upon them, to their utter desolation and ruine. So that it concerns you to seek their good, and to incourage them in their holiness, as you tender your own welfare. Were it not for the servants of Christ, you would quickly be in a miserable case. And therefore when God doth gather his own people unto himself, it is usually the forerunner of some sore calamity, *Isa.* 57.1. *The righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* Plainly intimating, that it

was

was their presence which staved off vengeance for a time; and when they are called home, then the floud-gates of wrath are set open. It is upon their account that God doth restrain the wickedness of men, that they are not as monsters, and devils one to another; and that he doth with-hold the pouring out his wrathful indignation. You know, what he saith in relation to *Sodom*, whose sin was grievous, and the cry of it was great, and went up to heaven; yet, if there had been ten righteous persons in it, the place had been spared for their sakes: And however, nothing could be done against it, till righteous *Lot* was gone forth, *Gen.* 18. 32. *Gen.* 19. 22, 23, 24.

Indeed *sometimes the wickedness of a place is so excessively heinous, that it is beyond the prayers of the godly.* The most eminent persons in holiness shall not prevail for the sparing it. *Though* Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in it, they shall deliver but their own souls by their righteousness*, Ezek. 14. 13, 14. Yet, in many cases, they are instrumental by their presence and prayers, not only to deliver themselves, but to keep off vengeance from others. And will you root them out, who are the means of your preservation? You think they are these *precise persons*, who speak so much of Religion, and are more strict than others, that hinder your mirth, and jollity. What brave times of pleasure should you have, were it not for these Precisians, who are as thornes in your sides, and rubs in the way of your rejoycings, and merriment? But *Sirs*, if you believe the Scriptures, it is evident, that were it not for the godly amongst you, you might soon expect to fall under the saddest dispensations, and to have the sluces of the fury of the God of hea-

ven set wide open upon you. As soon as *Noah* was arkt, the floud swept away the world of the ungodly. As soon as *Lot* was lodg'd in *Zoar*, it rained fire and brimstone (*as it were*, hell from heaven) upon *Sodom* and *Gemorrah*. And mark what our Saviour speaketh of Gospel-times, *Mat.* 24. 22. *Except those dayes should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. But for the elects sake those dayes shall be shortened.* Were it not upon the account of the servants of God, who are converted, and such as hereafter are to be converted; the tribulation would prove like a sweeping rain, that leaveth nothing behind it. So that it concerns you in point of wisdom to love and cherish the Saints, and to take heed that they be not wronged: For they are *the best subjects* in a Kingdom; *the best neighbours* in the places where they abide; *the best relations* and *servants*, you can get into your families; they bring the blessing of heaven along with them, *Gen.* 30. 27. *Gen.* 39. 5. They are *the best friends* you can have, for they will be friends to your souls. So that I may allude to that passage of the Lord to *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 20. 7. *Restore the man his wife, for he is a Prophet, and shall pray for thee and thou shalt live.* Shew kindness to the godly, for they are favourites in the Court of heaven, intimately acquainted with God; *you*, united to Christ the Son of God; They will pray for thee, and be instrumental to avert and turn away judgments from thee, and to bring down blessings upon thy head; if not to save thy precious and immortal soul.

Cons. 2. *It is a shrewd sign that you are persons intended for utter extirpation and ruine, when God doth make use of you, as scourges to afflict his Saints, and to persecute his own peculiar people.* There is hardly a

more

more sure token of the destination of men, or any party of men, to utter destruction, than this, *that they are Gods rod for the whipping of his chosen servants.* For this is the usual method of his proceedings in that case: First he correcteth his children, and then the rod is thrown into the fire, *Isa.* 10. 5, 12. Possibly, he may grant them a little outward prosperity for a while, but at length he will break in upon them, as the breaking in of mighty waters; and will take them away as a whirlwind, both living and in his wrath. It is a shrewd sign that God hath determined to destroy them, who devour his people, and consult against his hidden ones. See what dreadful threatnings are denounced against *Edom* upon this very score, *Obad.* 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *Thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoyced over the children of* Judah *in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of their distress, &c.* And then it followeth, *v.* 15. *As thou hast done, so shall it be done unto thee, thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the Heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink and swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been. But upon mount* Zion *there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness, and the house of* Jacob *shall possess their possessions. And the house of* Jacob *shall be a fire, and the house of* Joseph *a flame, and the house of* Esau *for stubble; and they shall kindle in them and devour them, and there shall not be any remaining of the house of* Esau: *for the Lord hath spoken it.* Read also *Zech.* 12. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. and *Isa.* 34. the whole Chapter. *Paul* indeed was pluckt as a firebrand out of this burning; he was con-

verted unto the Lord in the very heat of his opposition; but it is mentioned as a wonderful act of grace, as exceeding abundant mercy, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13, 14, 16. Do you be incouraged by his example, to submit to the terms of mercy, whilst it is offered; and not to go on to kick against the pricks.

Conf. 3. *This is a special matter which Christ will enquire into, in the day of accounts, how you have carried your selves towards his members*: And if you have set against them, or neglect to seek their good, he will avenge it upon you, as if you had despised himself. See how he makes their case his own, *Mat.* 25. 42, 43, 44, 45. *I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not.* Pray *mind it Sirs*, What answer could you make against such a charge, in the great and notable day of the Lord? What apology could you plead for your selves, that you opposed Christ, and neglected to give him relief? What reason could you produce, why you should not be sentenced to hell for it? If Christ should say, *I walked in the way of holiness, and you hated me for it; I was much in prayer and converse with the godly, and you turned it into my reproach? I durst not run as others to excess of riot, and you were filled with rage and madness against me*: What defence could you make to acquit your selves from this charge? Perhaps you would deny the charge, *and say*, we never set against Christ; far be it from us to despise the Lord Jesus; we love him and honour him with all our hearts: only we now and then trampled upon a few hot-spirited people, who were more nice than wise, and more strict than

they

they needed, and cried out against out sins, and corruptions. But when did we spurn at Jesus Christ? When did we see the Son of God, and did not minister unto him? *Why Sirs*, this is the very plea which the reprobates will make, at that day; but see how our Saviour will reject and over-rule their plea, upon this very ground; Because he and his Saints are united, and what is done unto them, is as if it were done personally unto Christ, *v. 45. Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me.* Your despising them is a despising Christ. So that consider what will be the end of all your contempt and oppressions of the godly, but to perish for ever? For mark the dreadful sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*; *q.d.* Now you serve the devil herein, and hereafter you shall have your portion with the devil, and his angels.

This is for the *first Exhortation* to the wicked, *in relation to the godly.*

2. *In reference unto the wicked themselves*, let me direct unto such, a twofold word of *Exhortation*,

{ 1. *Negatively.*
{ 2. *Affirmatively.*

1. *Negatively.* If Union with Christ be of such absolute necessity in order to salvation through him; *Be exhorted to take heed, that you do not build your hopes of eternal life, upon any privilege or attainment, that falleth short of this grace of oneness with the Son; or that may belong to a person which hath not the Son.* For except you have the Son, you cannot possibly have an interest in the possession that he

hath

hath purchased. *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life.* So that if you bottom your hopes upon that which may consist without union with Christ, and may be found in such as are not ingrafted into him; it will certainly prove but a sandy foundation, and not able to support the fabrique which you reject upon it.

My brethren, It is a matter which neerly concerns us, to make a diligent enquiry into the reason of our hopes of eternal life; and to see what are the foundations upon which they are bottomed; whether they are built upon the sand, or upon a rock. Many poor souls are undone for ever, for want of making this enquiry: they have strong hopes and expectations of being saved, but are able to produce no reason of their hopes; or else they build their confidence upon such sorry grounds, as will not minister a sufficient reason for cherishing such hopes; and so they go on securely, till they drop into hell, ere they are aware of it. Now therefore for the prevention of self deceit in the entertainment of your hopes, see that you do not swerve from this general Rule; *There is no priviledge which may be seperated from the grace of union with Christ, or that is to be found in any persons, which have not the Son, that can be a sufficient ground for hopes of eternal life. All such foundations are but sandy foundations*, and therefore do not rest upon them. It is *Christ in you which is the hope of glory*, Col. 1. 27. If the Lord Jesus have not taken up his residence in you, by the workings of the holy Ghost, and if you are not implanted into him; all your hopes of salvation will vanish, and come to nothing, whatever other foundations you build upon.

I will instance in *divers things*, which carnal persons are apt to rely upon.

1. *Church-membership, and such spiritual advantages as have a dependance thereupon, are but a sandy foundation*; though many lay the strets of their hopes upon this bottom. They expect to be saved, because they were born in the Church, and are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, they enjoy the presence of Gospel-Ordinances, and give their attendance upon them. Surely, *think they*, it cannot go amiss with our souls, who hear Christ's word, and are present at his institutions, and belong unto the Church; however it fareth with Heathens and infidels. But, *mind it Sirs*, these things may be *without having the Son*, which is of indispensable necessity to eternal life. A man may be visibly a member of the Church of Christ, and yet an utter stranger unto Christ himself, the head of the Church: He may externally and in appearance belong to Christ's kingdom, and yet really be a subject of the devils kingdom: He may be present at the Ordinances, and yet have no communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, in his Ordinances: He may be baptized with water in Christ's name, and yet never taste the baptism of the holy Ghost, whereby believers are spiritually knit unto him. You read of the *children of the Kingdom cast into outer darkness*, Mat. 8. 12. And *in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*, Gal. 6. 15. Circumcision is put, *by a Synechdoche*, for all outward priviledges, into which that Ordinance was an inlet: These will never save you from hell, unless you be sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, and so implanted into him. When the Lord cometh to

execute

execute judgment upon the ungodly, he will bind the Heathen and unsanctified Church-members in the same bundle together, and cast them into the lake of fire. *Jer. 9. 25, 26. He will punish the circumcised with the uncircumcised*; Egypt, *and* Judah, *and* Edom, *and the children of* Ammon, *and* Moab, *and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of* Israel *are uncircumcised in the heart.* Church-priviledges if not rightly improved, will be as oyl to make the flames of hell fire burn hotter upon thee; But they will avail nothing to save thee from hell, except thou be married unto Christ, the head of the Church.

2. *Great measures of the knowledge of the will of God, and an insight into the doctrines revealed in the Scriptures, are a sandy foundation, whereupon to build your hopes of eternal life.* For they are to be found in persons, that were never ingrafted into Christ. A man may know much of the doctrines of Christianity, when yet he never was taught the truth, as it is in Jesus. There may be a clear head to apprehend the principles of Religion, and yet an unclean and unsanctified heart. He may discourse understandingly to the edification of others, of such mysteries of godliness, as he never felt the power of in himself. He may know many things touching the Son, that never learnt of the Father, so as to be drawn unto the Son. And indeed all the knowledge of hypocrites is no knowledge in Gods account, and will only serve to double the stripes* wherewith they shall

* *Melius est ergo & utilius idiotas, & parum scientes existere, & per charitatem proximum fieri Deo, quam putare multum scire, & multa expertos in suum Deum blasphemos inveniri.* Iræn. adv. hær.

shall be beaten, *Luke* 12. 47. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a lyar, and the truth is not in him*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 4. If a sinner did truly know the excellency of Christ, he could not but love him, and thirst after his righteousness; he would never be at rest in his spirit, till he had secured his interest in him, and were able to call him, his Lord and his Saviour, *Joh.* 4. 10.

3. *Some inclination in the affections towards the things of God, is not a sufficient ground whereupon to build our hopes of eternal life*: For it may consist with an estate of estrangedness and separation from the Lord Jesus Christ; and there is no salvation by the Son, without having the Son. A man may rejoyce at Christ's word, that doth not give up himself in sincerity to be his servant: He may see a lovelinesse and excellency in the wayes of holiness, that was never wrought up to an actual walking in those wayes. We meet with *John Baptist's* hearers, that they were willing for a season to rejoyce in his light, *Joh.* 3. 25. He was a powerful and affectionate Preacher, and his doctrines raised up some flashy joy in their spirits that heard him; when yet the word took not such root as to make them fruitful. *So*, many who attended upon the Ministery of Christ wondered (*as the Text saith*) at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; and yet never felt a gracious work upon their hearts: as is evident from the sequel of their carriage towards him, *Luke* 4. 22. A sinner may be warmed at the fire of Gospel-truths, that hath not his lusts and corruptions consumed thereby.

4. *Comparative righteousness, is a sandy foundation of hopes of eternal life*. Although many persons imbarque

imbarque in this bottom. They are better than others, and wallow not in that filthiness wherewith multitudes are defiled; and therefore their inward thought is, that certainly their condition is good, however it fare with *such and such* profane persons. But, *mark it Sirs*, this is no proof of union with Jesus Christ; you may be better than others (*comparatively*, *i. e.* not so bad as others) and yet enemies to the Son of God, and the power of godliness: For there are different ranks and degrees of impenitent sinners, but all of them in the same state of damnation. There was none of the Kings of *Israel* like unto *Ahab*; and yet many of them were bad enough, being servants of the devil; and such as promoted his interest, though not at that rate as *Ahab* did, 1 *King*. 21. 25. He may die as a Weavet, that never had such violent *parcoysms*, as others have felt: So a sinner may perish in his iniquity, who yet is not so notorious for impiety as some others are. This the *Pharisee* could have pleaded, nay it was the foundation which he built upon, *Luk*. 18. 11. *God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican*. And yet he went down to his house a condemned person. All that can be said in the comfort of such a one is this, *That he will have a cooler place in hell*, than some others who have ran beyond him in the perpetration of horrid abominations.

5. *A meer civil conversation, and inoffensive carriage towards men, is a poor foundation of a man's hope*. You have some will lean upon this prop, and be very confident of their salvation upon this ground, because they pay all men their due, and walk honestly towards their neighbours; and defie all the world

world to bring in a bill of accusation against them. But this will prove as a rotten pillar, that cannot support the Fabrick: For observe what our Saviour saith to the *Pharisees*, *Luke* 16. 15. *Ye are they which justifie your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among st men is abomination to God.* Mark it, here is the question, Is thy heart washed and sanctified? Art thou regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, and so knit unto him? The God before whom thou must appear, is the searcher of the hearts, and will bring to light the hidden things *of darkness. He seeth those secret and spiritual wickednesses, that lodge within thee, which the world cannot discern. He taketh a view of those inward pollutions, and filthinesses, which pass the eye of the most curious inquisitor, amongst the children of men. Civility is a mercy for which thou art bound to bless the name of God, but it will not entitle thee to the Kingdom of God. *For the obtaining of that, thou must be united to Christ. Unconverted *Paul* was of a blameless conversation, and yet a child of the wrath of God: And therefore when he had a right knowledge of matters, he did not rest herein, but earnestly breathed after Christ, and rejected all things *that he might be found in him*, Phil. 3. 6, 8.

* *Deest aliquid intus.* Said one of a picture when he tried to make it stand and walk of itself. *There wants something within.* So it may be said of the unregenerate moralist. There wants a Principle of spiritual life within.

* *Va etiam vira laudabili.* Aug.

6. *Legal sorrow for sin, and a kind of reformation thereupon, will not serve to beget a well-grounded hope*

of

of eternal life. When sinners are under some pangs of conviction, that damps their mirth for a while; and their consciences are troubled for some ungodliness which they have committed, and this trouble prevaileth so far as to make them leave the practise of that ungodliness for the present: Hence they are apt to cherish strong confidence of their salvation. Surely (*think they*) it cannot go amiss with us, who have felt such disquietness in our spirits, and begin to lead a new life: What will bring a man to heaven, if this will not? But *man*, one thing thou lackest yet, and that is *union with Christ* the Son of God. Unless thy sorrow for sin prove efficacious to drive thee quite out of thy self, and to cause thee to give up thy soul into the hands of the Mediator, whom God hath appointed, it will in no wise conduct thee to everlasting glory. *Judas* was troubled for sin, and restored the pieces of silver which he had gotten, as the wages of unrighteousness, and yet he went unto his own place. *Mat.* 27. 4, 5. *Act.* 1. 25. He had deep gashes of conviction cut in his conscience, whereby he was wounded sorely; and yet perished for ever, for want of getting into Christ, and application thereby of the healing balsom of his righteousness. There may be much torture and vexation in the heart for sin, and such as may carry a man to some amendment of life; and yet not a drop of that godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation; nor the least degree of that evangelical brokenness, and contrition of spirit, which driveth the sinner unto Christ, that he may find rest for his soul.

7. *The meer external performance of spiritual duties, is no sufficient ground whereupon to bottom our hopes of eternal life.* Such as prayer, and reading the Scriptures,

Scriptures, and frequenting religious exercises; and the like. These are good means, if rightly managed, to bring a sinner unto Christ; but in themselves they are no evidence of a good estate. The *Pharisee* was much in outward duties, and yet he was not justified, *Luke* 18. 12. A person may make many prayers, and play the counterfeit in all that he doth: Many confess sin, and plead against it with their mouths; and in the mean while hug it in their bosoms; they pretend to earnest desires of grace and holiness in their expressions, but hate it in their affections, with a perfect hatred; they read the Scriptures to find out the will of God, and yet retain a secret resolvedness of spirit to follow the dictates of their own wills: they attend with their bodies on the Ordinances of Christ, whilst their hearts go after covetousness, and other base corruptions, *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32. Many labour only to stop the mouth of conscience with outward performances, who are utterly strangers to the workings of a renewed principle. *Besides*, What are the Institutions and Ordinances of Christ, except they lead the soul unto Christ? That is the very end of their appointment, to bring us unto him, and to build us up in him; without an interest in whom, *by way of union with him*, there is no right to the kingdom of heaven attainable by any.

8. *The good opinions of the godly, are but a sandy foundation of hope.* It is a great mercy to converse with such as are spiritually wise, and to have a place and seat in their affections, who are *favourites* in the court of heaven: But it is no sure evidence of our title to heaven. And *the reason is this*, Because their estimation of others may arise from

a mistake of their persons, judging them only by what is visible and apparent in open view; but God is a discerner of the secret recesses of the heart. *The Lord seeth not as man seeth*, 1 *Sam.* 16. 7. How was *David* mistaken in *Achitophel*? They took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company, and yet he was an accursed person, and wickedness was in his dwelling, *Psal.* 55. 14. They may be much in the affections of the godly, who are an abomination unto the Lord. So that, trust not in this as a sign of a good estate: Thou mayest be of great repute amongst Christians, and yet alienated from Jesus Christ; whereas it is only *union with the Son*, and ingrafture into him which will give thee a right to salvation.

9. *Lastly*, (that I may hasten to a conclusion) *A being joynted in fellowship with this, or the other party, who make a stricter profession of godliness than others, is an insufficient ground whereupon to build our hopes of eternal life.* This is all the proof that some can make of their sincerity, Because they are of such a persuasion, and settled in a Church way, with such eminent professors; they are of the same judgment and hold the same opinions with them: this is made the foundation of great measures of confidence. But, *mark it Sirs*, It is not external communion and brotherhood with the highest rank of Christians, that will conduct a sinner to the kingdom of heaven, without a spiritual conjunction with Christ himself. Many unbelievers went with the children of *Israel* out of the Land of *Egypt*, even a mixt multitude that imbarkt in the same bottom with them, and yet never arrived at the Land of promise. *Judas* was in external fellowship with the Apostles, and yet the son of perdition.

The

The five foolish virgins held society with the wise, and were accounted as members of their association, and yet the door of heaven was shut against them, *Mat.* 25. 1, 2, 12. If you would have good hopes through grace of your eternal salvation, you must be knit to the Captain of salvation: If you would enjoy the inheritance, you must be espoused to Christ, the heir of all things: *for he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life.*

2. *Affirmatively.* If union with Christ be of such absolute necessity, in order to salvation by Christ: *Then be exhorted, with unwearied endeavours, to labour after this grace of union.* Give all diligence to get into Christ. Dost thou not perceive there is no salvation without it? This is the standing Law of the God of heaven, which cannot be reversed or altered, *That such as will be made partakers of eternal life, must be intimately joyned unto the Son of God.* So that think seriously with thy self, what is like to be thy case, if thou shouldest depart hence without being ingrafted into Christ. *Why man,* It is not all the world can preserve thee from eternal destruction. Be not deceived, either thou must have the Son of God, or perish irrecoverably for ever under the wrath of God. To what purpose is all your knowledge of Christ, and the way of salvation through him, except you be in him? This is the end of the Ministry of the Gospel, that you may have an interest in him, and grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, *Eph.* 4. 15.

In order to the attainment of this *foundation-mercy,* let me beseech you to observe, and follow *these ensuing directions.*

Direct. 1. If you would be knit to Christ, that you may be saved upon his account, *labour to work up your hearts, unto an utter despair of having salvation upon any lower terms, or in any other way whatsoever.* Press such considerations powerfully upon your spirits, as may have a tendency to drive you from taking sanctuary in any other refuge. Study to overturn your hopes of getting deliverance by any other means: For *my Brethren*, one of the first steps in our motion towards Christ, and getting into him, is the casting away all hopes of being saved otherwise. The holy Ghost doth observe it as the great obstacle and impediment, in the way of salvation, that sinners do not cast off their presumptuous hopes: they see their misery by sin, but have secret thoughts in their hearts that they shall have peace notwithstanding, *Isa.* 57. 10. *Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way, yet thou saidst not there is no hope: thou hast found out the life of thine hand, therefore thou wast not grieved.* Mark it, here was the reason of their continuance in sin, because they retained their presumptuous hopes: They did bolster up themselves in some groundless confidence of escaping, notwithstanding their impenitence. They were not humbled for their transgressions, because *they found out the life of their hand*; *i. e.* they still imagined to find some comfort, and support, ready at hand upon all occasions; or sufficient means to strengthen their hand, and to yield them succour; or they relied upon their own righteousness, their legal performances, the work of their hands: they expected life and salvation from thence. But these are vain thoughts and expectations, such as must be rejected in order to salvation, *Jer.* 4. 14. *O Jerusalem wash thine heart from wick-*

wickedness, that thou mayest be saved; how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? i. e. thy vain thoughts of being saved at a cheaper rate, without being washed * and sanctified. Many carnal people are offended with us, when we preach doctrines of terror, and set forth the severity of God towards Christless sinners; because, *as they object*, this is the way to drive them to despair, and to overthrow all their hopes. Why *man*, It is the design of our Ministry to drive thee to utter despair of ever being saved, without the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and of being saved by Christ, except you are united to him, and made spiritually one with him. We would not have you *despair* of finding mercy with the Lord, if you repent and be converted, and give up your selves to the Son of God, upon the terms of the Gospel: But it is that which we drive at to cause you wholly to despair, and to cast off all hopes of being saved by the Son, except you have the Son. *This despair* will awaken you out of your security, and make you restless in spirit till you have gotten into the City of refuge: It will make you earnest in prayer unto God, and to follow hard after him, with a vigorous and unwearied importunity, till he hath brought you unto Christ, and ingrafted you into him.

* *Ego igitur non dubito quin Propheta hic fallaces illas spes designet, quibus Judæi obstinatiores erant adversus Deum, ac sibi à nullâ pœnâ metuerent.* Calv. in loc.

And because I am fallen upon this argument; wherein many poor souls are deluded, *who live in the common practise of sin, but will think God they do not despair*; not considering that a despair of be-

ing saved in an unconverted estate, is one of the first steps leading to conversion: I will therefore take the liberty to enlarge a little upon this head, by shewing you wherein the rock of despair is indeed dangerous, and to be avoided; and wherein, *on the other hand*, we are bound to despair, and to cast off all hope, that we may diligently prosecute the things that concern our peace. And this I will do by giving you *five Scripture Theses, or Assertions* touching this matter.

1. *Observe*, That the mercy of God, for the acceptance of humble penitent and believing sinners, is infinitely great, even as his nature and essence, and it is an attribute which he taketh special delight in the exercise of. So that there is no cause of despair, for the most heinous offenders, of finding grace and compassion with the Lord, if they return unto him in sincerity. *Though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow; and though they be red like crimson* [of the deepest colour, and aggravated with the most greatning circumstances] *they shall be as wool*, Isa. 1. 18. Hast thou played the harlot with many lovers? *yet return unto me, saith the Lord*, Jer. 3. 1. Have thy sins reached unto the Heavens? *yea*, but the mercy of God is above the heavens, being unsearchable as himself; for his compassions are himself: He is a God of mercy, his nature and essence is made up of it, *Psal.* 62. 12. Hast thou multiplyed thine abominations, above what can be reckoned? *yet*, his compassions are more than can be numbred: *Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the man of iniquity his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will multiply to pardon*, Isa. 55. 7. But can it ever

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enter into the heart of a man to think, that God will ever pardon such a wretch as I have been, *may the sinner say?* Mind what followeth, v. 8. He is God and not man, his mercies are not to be measured by our scantling. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord: For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

2. The death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, which he underwent for satisfaction of the justice of God, are of infinite value, and have given plenary content and satisfaction: and he is at the right hand of the Father to plead that satisfaction in the behalf of lost sinners. So that there is no ground of despair in this respect; as if they might be greater offenders, than the blood of Jesus could purchase acceptance for. *He is able to save to the uttermost, Heb.* 7. 25. and there is nothing beyond the uttermost. If you perish for ever, it is not for want of merit in the death of Christ; for it was the death of that person, *who is the eternal God, Act.* 20. 28. It was the death of the man, *who was God's fellow, Zech.* 13. 7. The Father hath accepted of the price that he paid; *In him he is well pleased*, fully contented as to all the demands of his justice, *Mat.* 3. 17. *Eph.* 5. 2. So that if you address your selves unto Christ, and to God by him, you may come with a full assurance of faith; without doubting of acceptance, though your sins have been never so great, and your condition never so deplorable, *Heb.* 10. 19, 22. *That's the second thing to be observed.*

3. As our Lord Jesus is able to save the most heinous sinners that come unto him in sincerity;

so he is as willing to receive them when they come, and he will in no wise cast them out. *As he is mighty in strength, so he is tender of heart*; his arms are open for the entertainment of such as come to him upon Gospel terms, and will subject themselves unto his government. So that there is no reason to despair of Christ's willingness to become thy Redeemer. Here is that at which poor sinners are apt to stick. Alas, *will they say*, We question not the sufficiency of his merit, but will he ever vouchsafe to undertake the patronage and salvation of such a rebel as I have been? Nay, but *O man*, art thou willing to accept him for thy Saviour and Master, and to follow his conduct, and to become his Disciple indeed? *Why*, he is abundantly more willing to receive thee into his protection. He beseecheth sinners to come unto him, and therefore surely he will not reject them when they do come, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. Yea, but I have been a very rebel against heaven, *will the sinner say*, for many years together, will not this hinder my acceptance? *Why*, mark that precious Text, *Psal.* 68. 18. *He hath received gifts for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell amongst them.* Oh, but never was there a sinner in such a case as I am, *will the soul be apt to urge against himself.* Yet if thou comest unto Christ, *he will in no case cast thee out.* Put the case that thou hast been guilty of the most horrid transgressions; put the case, that thou hast ran to all excess of riot: yet mind that comprehensive word of promise which proceeded out of Christ's own mouth, who is *the Amen*, the faithful and true witness, *Joh.* 6. 37. *All that the father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* It is an asseveration

tion strengthned with a double negative, in the original; * As if our Saviour had said, I will not cast him out, whosoever he be, that cometh unto me: Do you question it? I tell you, I will not: You may build upon it with the greatest confidence. As he hath elsewhere confirmed the promise of not forsaking those that are in him, I will *never, never, never, never leave thee nor forsake thee*, * *Heb.* 13.5. So here he hath strengthened the promise of not refusing such as come unto him, *I will not reject them*; I assure you (saith Christ) *I will not*. So that nothing can stand in the way of mans salvation, to hinder the accomplishment of it, but his own wilful impenitence and unbelief. *These are the cases*, wherein there is not the least ground of desperation in any broken-hearted sinner whomsoever; the Gospel hath provided plentiful remedy against it.

* Καὶ, τὸν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς με οὐ μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω.

* Ὃν μὴ -- οὐ οὐ μὴ.

4. *Note in the fourth place*, That the high-way which leadeth the children of men to this damnable despair, and so to give up themselves to commit iniquity with greediness, is *not doctrines of terror to the impenitent; but presumptuously sinning against the Lord*. When persons will walk contrary to the light of their own consciences, and the clear dictates of the word of God, and suffer their vile affections to suppress, and stifle the convictions wrought upon their hearts; this is the direct path that tends to desperation. *I pray mind it Sirs*, Poor ignorant people are very much deluded in this particular: When they hear doctrines of wrath and judg-

judgment to come, and everlasting destruction prepared for the workers of iniquity, they presently cry out against the Ministers; *These are Preachers of damnation, they would drive us to despair.* Nay, but *O vain man*, those doctrines tend to shew you the necessity of Christ, and getting an interest in him, and to cause you to despair in your selves, which is a good step to salvation: It is rebelling against the light, and sinning against knowledge, which make way for *damnable despair.* What made *Cain* despair, but because he had wickedly and wilfully departed from the Lord, and trampled the commandment under his feet? What brought *Judas* to despair, but forcing down the dictates of his own light and conscience? And you read of the people in *Isaiah*, They roared like Bears in the agony of their spirits, because they had gone on to sin against knowledge, *Isa.* 59. 10, 11, 12.

5. But then, *in the last place*, There are *four cases* wherein I would quicken you to despair, and to press such arguments upon your hearts, as may be influential to incline you thereunto. And without such kind of despairing, you will never effectually mind the working out your salvation.

1. You must despair of ever coming to the kingdom of heaven hereafter, *unless you bring forth the fruits of righteousness here; and endeavour to be holy in all manner of conversation.* If you live in any course of sin, or in the neglect of observing any of God's commandments, it is not possible you should come to the enjoyment of God; whilst you abide in that estate. Never dream of being saved without holiness; for such imaginations are but dreams and fancies, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men,*

and

and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, &c. q. d.* It is a plain case that the unrighteous will perish unavoidably; it is a token of gross ignorance to think otherwise: Do not hope for, or expect salvation without righteousness; for by such hopes and expectations, you will but cheat your own souls, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: Of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Mark it, if a man live in any of these sins, *or in any other sin like unto these*; whether it be filthiness of the flesh, or of the spirit; open or secret; though not here particularly enumerated; he cannot enter into eternal life. It is a matter (*as if the Apostle had said*) which I have studied, and the more I think of it, the more I am confirmed in it: I have preached this doctrine to you formerly, and I am still of the same mind; and therefore warn you of it again, that if you be such persons you cannot be saved.

2. Although I counsel you to be much in the works of righteousness, yet you must despair of ever being justified, or saved, *upon the account of your righteousness.* For alas, what are the best of our righteousnesses to give satisfaction to the justice of God, for the wrong that we have done him? If you be pardoned and accepted of the Lord, it must be for the sake of the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and

and not by virtue of any thing of your own. *For the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe*, Gal. 3. 22.

3. Although you must be active and diligent in the service of God, and labour to walk in uprightness before him; yet you are utterly to despair *of doing this in your own strength.* It is only strength and assistance from Jesus Christ, that will inable you to be faithful unto Christ. If you trust in your own hearts, they will deceive you, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Psal.* 71. 15, 16. *

4. I would counsel you to work up your hearts, to an utter despair *of receiving either righteousness or strength from Christ, except you get into him.* Sit down and rest in this conclusion, that unless you be united to the Son of God, you cannot dwell in the presence of God. There is no salvation to be had upon other terms. And thus to despair of deliverance, in a state of separation from Christ, is an excellent means, or inducement to drive you unto him. Thus the Law is our School-master to lead us unto Christ; *i. e.* by convincing us of our undone condition without him. * It pursueth us with wrath, as the avenger of bloud, that we may be forced to hasten into the City of refuge, *Gal.* 3. 24.

* *Ad evulsionem hominis à statu peccati, requiritur, 3. ut ex evictione conscientiæ, desperatio salutis consequatur, & respectu nostrarum virium, & omnis etiam auxilii quod à creaturis haberi potest.* Ames. de cons.

* *Lex in vero suo officio est ad gratiam ministra & præparatrix: prodest ad justificationem, non quod justificat, sed quia urgeat ad promissionem gratiæ, & eam facit dulcem & desiderabilem.* Luth.

This

This is the *first Direction* I intended, in order to the attainment of this grace of union.

Direct. 2. If you would be united unto the Son, *Get the Spirit of the Lord Jesus into your hearts.* It is only the holy Ghost, who is sent in his name, that can lead you unto him, and ingraft you in him, and form Christ within you. And if you have not the Spirit of Christ you cannot be his, *Rom.* 8. 9. And therefore to this end. 1. Be much in prayer to God for this very mercy, that he would graciously send the Spirit of his Son into your souls. There is an encouraging word to draw forth your fervent supplications in this behalf, *Luke* 11. 13. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* It is the mercy which he delights to be sought unto for, and to be dealing forth, in return to the prayers of his Servants. 2. Be much conversant with the word of Christ, and constant in your attendance upon the Ordinances of the Gospel. Be frequent in reading and studying the Scriptures, make them the matter of your daily meditations; lose no opportunity to acquaint your selves therewith, or to wait upon Christ in the wayes of his appointment. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom*, Col. 3. 16. For it is the word and institutions of Jesus Christ which are designed as conduit-pipes to convey the spirit of sanctification into mens hearts. And therefore the word hath the promise of conversion annexed unto it, because the spirit of conversion worketh in, and with, and by the word, *Psal.* 19. 7. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.* Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own will he begat us with the word of truth.* As the

the word cannot work savingly without the concurrent operation of the holy Ghost; So the holy Ghost doth not *ordinarily* work without the word: *For the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth*, Rom. 1. 16. And when our Saviour prayeth for them that should be gathered unto him, it is under this expression, *For them also shall believe on me, through their word*, Joh. 17. 20. 3. Take heed that you resist not the Spirit, by quenching his motions, or rising up in contradiction against the convictions that he is pleased to work upon your hearts. Readily hearken to his call, and comply with him in the tenders of grace. If you repel him by the frowardness and perverseness of your spirits, you know not when he will return, Joh. 3. 8. Take therefore the Apostles advice, Eph. 4. 30. *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

Direct. 3. If you would be knit unto Jesus, and so have an interest in him, *endeavour after the uniting grace of faith in his blood*; cast your selves upon his righteousness for salvation, according to the proposals of the Gospel: Receive him for your Redeemer, as he is tendred therein: Believe in the name of the Lord Jesus, Joh. 6. 29. *This is the work of God, that you should believe on him whom he hath sent*; *i. e.* It is a work exceedingly acceptable unto God; it is the great work that he requires, to bring you unto his Son; that you may have life through his blood. It is that work, that makes up the conjunction betwixt him and your souls. And therefore what is attributed in one place *unto union with Christ*, is in another place ascribed *unto faith*, Rom. 8. 1. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* Joh. 3. 18. *He that be-*

believeth on him is not condemned. Why? Because it is faith which makes up the union; by believing on Christ we are implanted into him. And therefore take the word of direction, Jo. 12. 36. *Believe in the light, that you may be the children of light*; betake your selves by faith unto Christ, that you may be found in him. And to that purpose be frequent in meditation upon those incouragements, which God hath given unto sinners, to quicken them to believe on the name of his Son, and to help against the misgivings of their own hearts. *I will instance only in five.*

1. *It is the command of God*, that which he hath left in special charge upon mens souls, *to come unto Christ, that they may be saved.* And therefore it evidently followeth that he is willing you should believe; for it is that which he mainly desireth, that his will be done, that his precepts be observed. Can you imagine that God should give you a strict commandment, backt with many arguments and motives, to the observance of it, and yet be loath you should obey that commandment? *This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*, 1 Joh. 3. 23.

2. *God sent his Son into the world upon this very errand and business, that he might draw sinners unto him, in order to their salvation*: And the Lord Jesus took our nature upon him, and was obedient unto the death, the accursed death of the cross, to this very end and purpose, that sinners might come unto him, and obtain eternal redemption through his blood. And can it ever enter into your hearts to think, that God is not willing to accomplish what he hath designed to bring about? or that Christ is not willing to attain the end of his sufferings?

What

What was the Fathers design in sending Christ into the world? *Why*, that we might live through him, and that he might be a propitiation for our sins? 1 *Joh.* 4. 9, 10. Wherefore hath he published the Gospel of Christ, and revealed the glad tidings of salvation through him? *Why, These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name;* Joh. 20. 31. To what end did our Saviour leave the bosom of his Father, and sojourn amongst us, and bear the weight of his fathers indignation? Mark what account himself giveth of it, *Jo.* 12. 46. *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness.* And ✠ 47. *I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.* And speaking of his death under the similitude of lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, *v.* 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*

3. God hath left upon record many precious promises, on purpose to invite sinners unto Christ; *from which none are excluded, but such as shut out themselves, by refusal of the grace which is tendered to them.* And they are promises of such extent and comprehensiveness, as may be sufficient to answer all the *objections* of a mans spirit against believing in Jesus, *Joh.* 3. 15. *Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Act. 13. 39. *By him all that believe are justified, from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.* But *will the sinner object*, I am altogether unworthy to come unto the Son of God. *Why* Sirs, It is the due sense of our unworthiness that doth fit us for the ready reception of him, and addressing ourselves unto him, that we may by his righteousness

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be made worthy. Art thou apprehensive of the necessity of being partaker of his death, and the merit thereof? Dost thou hunger and thirst after the enjoyment of him? See then the promise or invitation, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2, 3. *Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money* [that hath no desert, or worthiness of his own, to commend him unto God, or whereby to purchase the least dram of favour] *come ye, buy and eat; yea come, and buy wine and milk, without money, and without price*, &c. O but, *will the sinner reply*, I have long stood out against the calls of Christ, and will he now receive me graciously if I come unto him? *Why*, Hear what he saith, *Isa.* 57. 17, 18, 19. *For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him; I hid me, and was wroth; and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart; i. e.* He withstood chastizement, which is one of the loudest, and most awakening calls; in the time of his distress he sinned yet more against the Lord: Instead of returning, he held fast deceit, and refused to return: *He went on frowardly*, that is, perversly, and stubbornly against all the dealings of God. And yet what followeth, *v.* 18? *I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comfort to him, and to his mourners.* One would have expected it thus rather, I have seen his wayes and I will confound him, I will never more have any pity, or compassion upon him. *Nay*, but saith the gracious God, at length he mourns for sin, and is humbled for his iniquity, and my bowels are turned within me, my repentings are kindled together: He is coming towards me, and I will go forth to meet him; I will surely have mercy upon him; I will pardon him, and guide him in the

way of consolation and salvation. But what doth this concern me, *will the heart of a sinner be apt to suggest?* Am I comprized in this word of comfort? Yes, if thou mournest for sin, and desirest to give up thy self unto Christ, and to God by him: For it is a promise made without limitation; these words are intended for the benefit both of Jews and Gentiles, v. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace,* [*i. e.* My word shall be the means to convey great peace, spiritual peace, perfect peace, lasting, yea everlasting peace] *to him that is afar off, and to him that is near*; *i. e.* to the Jews, who were a people nigh unto God; and to the Gentiles when they shall be gathered to the Church, though at that time they were afar off; *and I will heal him, saith the Lord.* But, *will the sinner say,* I have backsliden from Christ; I have made many promises and faultered in the performance of them; I have deeply revolted, after frequent vows and protestations of obedience; *and shall such a wretch, as I am, find favour?* Observe the words of invitation and promise, *Jer.* 3. 12. *Return thou backsliding* Israel, *saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity,* &c. *Hos.* 14. 4. *I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely.* I might be very copious upon this particular, but must forbear. Get a catalogue of these rich and gracious promises; often read them, and study them; pray them over to God, and have them always in readiness, to produce in answer to all the suggestions of Satan, and the fears and despondencies of your own unbelieving hearts.

4. There are sundry examples in the Scripture, of the most heinous transgressors, who upon their

their believing on the Son of God, and returning by repentance unto the most high, have found grace in his sight: *and they are recorded unto this purpose, that they may be incouragements for us to be believe also.* Our first parents were the most wilful offenders; that sinned against the greatest light, and the clearest manifestation of the will of God: who by one sinful act were guilty of the murder of all the generations to come. The sin of our first parents (*and our sin in them*, Rom. 5. 12.) was not one single act of disobedience; but a twisted, complicated, or compounded sin, that carried many horrid offences in the bowels of it: There was *cursed blasphemy*, and *unbelief*, a giving God the lye, and not crediting his word; *monstrous idolatry*, in believing the suggestions of the devil, and hearkening to the instigations of the Prince of darkness; *devilish pride*, and *discontent* with that blessed condition wherein the Lord had placed man upon the earth; and affecting to be equal unto God himself; *unparallel'd cruelty*, (as before) venturing upon the insupportable wrath of God, to the destruction of themselves and all their off-spring: It was a sin committed in a most *presumptuous manner*, and had abundance of *ingratitude*, wrapt up in the nature of it: And yet the Lord was pleased to preach the Gospel unto them; and it is charitably supposed, that they found grace and forgiveness upon the terms of the Gospel: However, it is plain in the case of the woman, who was first in the transgression; so much may be collected, from the enmity put in her heart, against the devil, *Gen.* 3. 15.

Take the example of *Manasseth* King of *Israel*,

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who was a gross Idolater, and a witch, and a conjurer, and shed innocent bloud without measure, till he had filled *Jerusalem* from one end to the other; and his wickedness was not confined to his own person, but *he made* Judah *to sin*, 2 *King*. 21. 3, 6, 16. And yet *when he humbled himself, and sought the Lord, and prayed, he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication*. 2 *Chron*. 33. 12, 13. The Apostle *Peter* directed the offers of salvation upon repentance, unto the crucifiers of the Lord Christ; *who denied the holy one, and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them, and killed the Prince of life*, *Act*. 3. 14, 15, 16, 19, 26. Not to multiply instances of this nature, Take only further that of *Saul* who was a persecutor, and a blasphemer, and injurious; who compelled others to blaspheme, and was exceedingly mad against the Church; and yet upon his application to Christ he obtained mercy, 1 *Tim*. 1. 13. But what are these things to me, *will the drooping soul say*? How shall I be assured to find the like grace and compassion? Why *mind it*, These examples are recorded for thy sake; and to this very intent, that thou mayest take incouragement to cast thy burden upon the Lord, and expect to find the same abundant grace, as others have found before thee. See what the Apostle saith of himself, 1 *Tim*. 1. 16. *For this cause, I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting*; q. d. It was the design of Christ in shewing mercy upon me, to make it appear that he is ready to save others also; even the greatest sinners, if they will come unto him, that they may be saved.

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* To prove that we are thus to make use of these examples of mercy, consult that passage of *David*, Psal. 32. 5. *Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* And then it followeth; *ver.* 6. *For this shall every one that is Godly, pray unto thee, &c.* See also *Psal* 34. 6, 8.

* *Significat statim ab initio Deum proposuisse tale exemplar, quod tanquam ex illustri excelso, theatra conspici posset; ne quis diffideret paratam sibi fore veniam modo fide accederet ad Christum. Et certe praevenitur nostra omnium diffidentia, dum tam, quam quaerimus gratia typum in Paulo sic videmus expressum.* Calv. in loc.

5. The last incouragement to faith, which I shall mention to be considered is this, *That God is more eminently, and more abundantly glorified in the salvation of such as believe in the Lord Jesus, than in the condemnation of the impenitent and unbelievers.* And therefore, without dispute, he is willing that sinners should come unto the Son, that they may have life through his bloud: for it tends to the eminent advancement of his glory, which is the principal end which he aimeth at, in all his dispensations, and undertakings. Can you be so sottish, as to entertain a thought in your hearts, that God is not willing to have his name glorified? *why*, this is specially brought to pass, by our believing in Christ, and salvation upon his account; above what is wrought in the destruction of the wicked. God is *really glorified* in the vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction: but he doth make known *the riches of his glory* in the vessels of mercy which he before prepareth unto glory, *Rom.* 9, 22, 23. A little to make it appear, that it is so in very deed; because it is a comfortable point, and may be improved as a wonderful incouragement, to strengthen the hands

of faith, in taking hold of Christ; I will open it in *three particulars.*

God is glorified in the salvation of such as believe, above what he is in the condemnation of unbelievers.
1. *More ways.*
2. *In more of his attributes,* and excellencies.
3. In some of his attributes, *more transcendently.*

1. He is glorified *more ways, that is*, both actively and passively; *passively* on Christ their surety, and *actively* in themselves and him. God is glorified upon the ungodly in their eternal desolation and ruine, *i. e.* they are subjects upon whom he doth shew forth his power, justice, and severity, and the like; out of whom he doth fetch glory to his name, *Ezek.* 28. 22. But believers are active instruments to render glory unto the God of heaven. Their tongues will make mention of the praises of his name, and sing aloud of his righteousness, *Psal.* 149. 6. Their hearts will be filled with an holy admiration of his greatness, and majesty, and wonderful goodness in their redemption, 2 *Thes.* 1. 10. *He will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that do believe.* Their lives also will be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God, *Phil.* 1. 11.

2. God is glorified upon believers *in more of his attributes, and excellencies.* Peculiarly, in his *free grace*, and *tender mercy*; which is the attribute that he delighteth to magnifie, and taketh singular pleasure in the exercise of, *Mic.* 7. 18. God doth shew forth his *truth*, and *justice*, and declare his *power* and *holiness*, in the ruine of the ungodly; but

there

there are no prints or footsteps of his *free grace*, and *compassion*: Their portion is wrath without mixture, *Rev.* 14. 10. But what saith the Prophet of them that are saved? Mark that notable Text, *Isa.* 63. 7, 8. *I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon us: and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them, according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses. For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lye: So he was their Saviour.* Here is a discovery of grace, rich inexpressible grace; herein is manifest the goodness of God, *nay*, the great goodnesses of the Lord; here is mercy, and loving-kindness, yea, & a multitude of mercies, & loving-kindnesses.

3. In some of his attributes, *God is more transcendently glorified, viz.* in his wisdom, and power. It was a work of infinite skill and wisdom, to find out a way to redeem lost sinners from the jaws of eternal death: to execute vengeance upon the transgression, and yet to save the transgressors. *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom, and knowledge of God!* *Rom.* 11. 33. It is a work of greater power, to pull a soul out of the hands of the Devil, than to give him over to the will of Satan, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. Nay, the very justice of God is better satisfied by believers, through their surety, than in the damnation of such as perish in their unbelief. Here the price paid is the death of a creature, but there the precious bloud of the Son of God, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. The wicked that perish are ever satisfying, and have never given full satisfaction, for the wrong which they have done; their debt is paying,

ing, *as it were*, by *dribles*: But in the behalf of believers, the work is compleated and finished; the utmost farthing was paid together upon the nail; and there is nothing further to be demanded. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, *Heb.* 10. 14. Now if God be more glorified in the salvation of such as are in Christ; undoubtedly he is willing that you shou'd come unto Christ; and is ready to receive you when ye come. So much for the third direction.

Direct. 4. To stir you up to a closure with this advice, and diligent prosecution of this work of getting into Christ; Often revolve in your thoughts, and lay seriously to heart this following consideration, *viz. That if you perish for ever in a separation from the Lord Jesus, and for want of being in him, that you may partake of his righteousness, it will wholly proceed from your own default, and your blood will be upon your own heads.* And what anguish and horror will this bring to thy conscience in the day of accounts, to bethink thy self thus. *I might have been saved by the blood of the covenant, but I would not; and now I must lie bound for ever in the chains of darkness?* For it is a sinners willful rejecting of the tenders of mercy upon the terms of the Gospel, which is the cause of his falling short of the mercy tendred. Although it is *Gods free grace*, and not *mans free will*, that doth conduct believers unto the kingdom of heaven; yet it is the perverseness and *obstinacy of the will of unbelievers*, which hindereth their deliverance from the damnation of hell, *Jo.* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life*, Hos. 5. 4. *They will not frame their doings, to turn unto the Lord*, Ezek. 18. 31. *Why will ye die, O house of Israel? q. d.* If you are destroyed for ever,

you

you may thank your selves; you are the blameworthy cause of your own eternal ruine, by refusing the terms on which salvation is offered. And *I pray* think of it often, what an unspeakable torment it will be to thy spirit for ever, to reflect upon this very thing; I have been wooed and intreated to lay down the arms of my rebellion, and to submit to the government of Christ, that I might be saved, and I would not? How often hath the spirit of God strived with me, and I still resisted the Holy Ghost? The word of God hath called upon me, and I have broken through the convictions of the word. With what confusion wilt thou be filled, when the Lord Jesus shall say unto thee, how often would I have gathered thee into the number of my servants, and thou wouldest not be gathered! and now depart from me thou accursed wretch into everlasting fire, *Mat.* 23 37.

Thus I have ended *the first head of exhortations*, directed unto the *wicked*, who are yet strangers unto Christ.

2. *Let me speak unto the godly*, who are through rich mercy and grace ingraffed into Christ, and made partakers of this priviledge of union with the Son. *Be exhorted.* 1. *To be much in blessing the name of God, for his signal, saving, and differencing mercy.* Adore him for advancing you to this high dignity. *Behold what manner of love, the Father hath bestowed upon you, that you should be called the sons of* God! Nay, that he should take you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, and intimately knit you unto him! 1 *Jo.* 3. 1. Will you bless God for temporal mercies, and not be ravished with the contemplation of this super-eminent blessing? Certainly, *my brethren*, eternity itself will be little enough to admire

mire the wonderful and unsearchable grace of the Lord. 2. *Be exhorted*, moreover, *rightly to improve the consideration of this unspeakable gift.* And that especially in these *six cases.*

1. Improve it *in case of transgressions*, to humble you, and to fill you with an holy shame and self-abhorrence in the sense of your miscarriages. Not only to fill you with hatred against sin, but with a loathing and detestation of your selves, because of sin. Let your thoughts be set on work in this Evangelical manner; *Hath God advanced me to this high dignity, and shall I be so unworthy as to rise up against him? Am I a person closely joyned unto Christ, and in covenant with God through Christ, and shall I walk contrary to his commandments? O the vileness and basenesse of this heart of mine, which hath thus drawn me to sin against such a gracious Lord and Redeemer!* This is the great aggravation of sin; and thus will the kindness of God work upon you, if you have any principles of ingenuity. As *Lemuel's* Mother pleads with him, *Prov.* 31. 2. *What my Son! and what the son of my womb! and what the son of my vows! Give not thy strength unto women, &c.* So may the Lord plead with his own people, when they turn aside unto folly. *What you my children, whom I have taken so near unto my self! You that I have called out of the world, and married to my only begotten Son! What, you that are in Christ, the men of my covenant, and my intimate acquaintance! will you thus rebel against me? Is this a good requital of all the love that I have shewed you, and the great things which I have done for you?* See how this consideration melts the hearts of believers into Evangelical sorrow, and causeth them to lie down in their shame, *Ezek.* 16. 62, 63. *And I will establish my covenant with thee,*

and

and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.

2. *In case of temptations*, Improve it to strengthen you, and to make you resolute in opposing all solicitations unto sin. *Say within thy self*, Am not I knit unto Jesus Christ, and shall I follow the guidance of the prince of darkness? Shall I defile my soul with the pollutions of sin, who am taken into openess, and fellowship with my Lord and Savior? Far be it from me to close with this motion, to commit any of these abominations. * Let the swine wallow in the mire, and the dogs return to their vomit; shall I stain my garments, which have been washed in the blood of the Lamb? *Should such a man as I flee?* said *Nehemiah, cap. 6. 11.* So shouldest thou argue the case with thine own heart; *Shall such a one as I turn aside unto sin, and follow after lying vanities?* I am dead to sin, and married to my Redeemer, and how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? *Romans 6. 2.*

* *Sicut exultatis de nobilitate vestra titulo, ita disterre debuisse quid agendo vestrum fiat Rex. Quid vobis ita breviter definiam. Regem te omnium esse facit, si Christus regnet in te. Rex namque regendo dicitur esse. Si ergo & in te animus regnat, & carnem obtemperat; Si concupiscentiae earum sub jugum imperii tui mittas, & vitiorum genitor sobrietatis tuae frenis arctioribus premas, merito Rex dicetur, qui se recte regere noverit.* Orig. hom. 6. in cap. 5. Judic.

3. *In case of wants and necessities*, Improve this consideration to support you. Surely you shall not lack of every thing that is for your good, if you are knit

knit to Christ: for thereby you have a right to all things; And will the just God with-hold from you that which is your right? Take therefore no thought, and be not of a doubtful mind. Is not the Lord Jesus a greater gift, than food, and raiment, and other outward conveniencies? Hath God knit you to his Son, and thereby secured your everlasting welfare? and will he deny you the necessaries for your present subsistence? Hath he united you to the Captain of your salvation, to guide you to heaven? and will not he give you enough, to bear the charges of your journey thither? Let no such distrustful thoughts enter into your hearts; for if he hath given Christ for you, and implanted you into him, certainly he will with-hold no good thing from you. See but with what confidence the Apostle teacheth us to reason, *Rom.* 8. 32. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* *q.d.* It cannot be otherwise. If you have a right to Christ, God will deny you nothing, that is beneficial for you. How can you imagine the contrary? Do you think he will suffer them that are members of his dearly beloved Son, to lack any thing, which he knoweth to be fit for them? *Why,* your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of. So that *be careful for nothing* [with an anxious, heart-dividing, * or distrustful care] *but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God,* Phil. 4. 6. *Trust in the Lord, and do good: So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed,* Psal. 37. 3.

* Μεριμνα μεριμνῶν τὸν νοῦν, dividendâ & distrahendâ mente ...Animum nunc huc nunc dividit illuc, & rapit in partes varias. Virgil.

4. In

4. *In case of sore afflictions*, Improve it to comfort you. Make use of it as a cordial against fainting fits, in the day of tribulation and adversity. For if you are knit to Christ, be sure that the Lord will lay upon you no more than you shall be inabled to bear: Christ himself will see to it, that you be not hurt by your distresses; for you are his members. And do you think he will suffer any thing that is evil to befall the members of his own body, further than he knoweth it will conduce to their greater advantage? Why, *In all your afflictions he himself is afflicted*, and he tenders your concernments as his own: for you are one with him, *Isa.* 63. 8, 9.

5. *In case of doubts of Christ's forsaking you*, Improve it to keep under and silence your unbelieving surmises. Did the Lord Jesus take you into such nearness unto himself; and will he, now you are near unto him, leave you destitute of his loving kindness? Will he suffer his members to be torn from him? It is a matter cannot be supposed. So that see to it, that thou be indeed in Christ; and then *fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame*, &c. *For thy maker is thine husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy redeemer; the holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called.* Isa. 54. 4, 5.

6. Improve it *to quicken you to holiness of conversation*. Make use of it as an argument to inlarge your hearts in running the steps of Gods commandments, and to make you strict and diligent in your obedience unto him. Live above the world: walk not as the generality of people walk: Put on the Lord Jesus; Labour to be like unto him; *for you are one with him*. Let no difficulties move

move you from your course of godliness. Say often within your selves, Hath God vouchsafed to give his Son to me, and shall I think any thing too dear to part* with for his sake? Hath the Lord Jesus taken me into such a neer relation unto himself, and shall not I love him, and serve him with all my strength? Surely to this precious Saviour I will cleave, and his pleasure I will do, and nothing shall separate betwixt my soul and him. Take the exhortation in the words of S. *Paul, Col. 2. 6, 7. As ye have therefore received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted, and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

* *Qui gratus futurus est, statim dum recipit, de reddendo cogitat.* Sen, de Benef.

3. Let me add but *a few particulars*, by way of advice and exhortation *to all*, and so we will conclude our discourse upon this subject. If in order to the salvation of sinners by Christ, they must be united to him, and ingrafted in Christ; *Then be exhorted all of you.*

1. *To learn the spiritual lessons, which are from this point to be learned.*
2. *To practise the duties, that are hereupon to be practised.*

1. Learn the lessons which are from this doctrine to be learned: And they are *principally two*, which I shall commend unto you, besides what I gave you under the use of information.

1. Learn from hence, *The necessity of regeneration in order to eternal life.* Except you are persons born again of the Spirit, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Except you be quickned by the holy Ghost, it is impossible you should be blessed in the

the presence of the Lord. *Why?* Because you must have the Son, you must be knit unto Christ; and it is in the day of regeneration that the knot is tyed, whereby the Lord Jesus and a Christian are joyned together. It is the grace of regeneration and conversion that removeth a sinner from his own bottom, and buildeth him upon the Mediator, as upon a sure foundation: *as hath been largely opened.* So that, believe this point, and work it powerfully, by meditation, and prayer, upon your own hearts, *That no regeneration, no salvation.* It was the doctrine wherewith our Saviour began his Sermon to *Nicodemus*, and he speaketh of it as a matter of great concernment to be studied, *Joh.* 3. 3. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Mark how the assertion is strengthned with a double asseveration, *to note* how hard a thing it is to convince a sinner effectually of this matter; and how neerly it doth concern us to be thus convinced. *It is as if Christ had said,* The children of men are apt to think otherwise: they hope to get into heaven upon the account of their nodonal knowledge, and common priviledges, and moral righteousness, *and the like*; But it cannot be, I tell thee it cannot be; take it upon my word. Do your hearts question it? *Verily* it cannot be, *verily* it is impossible that any man should be saved, except he be sanctified.

Whence, *you will say*, doth arise this absolute necessity of a man's being born again? I *answer*: It doth arise from these *four things*.

1. *From the stedfastness and unalterableness of the purpose of God.* Whom he hath predestinated unto life,

life, he hath determined to lead thither, through the gate of regeneration. So that if ever you get to heaven without partaking of this grace, it must be by the change of the decree and purpose of God; which is in its own nature unchangeable; *for the counsel of the Lord standeth fast for ever.* And observe the tenour of his purpose touching the way of life, 2 *Thes.* 2. 13. *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit.* Although God doth not elect or save any of the children of men, for their holiness; yet he doth elect them unto holiness, that they may be saved.

2. The absolute necessity of regeneration doth appear, *from the infinite holiness and purity of the God of heaven:* who will never maintain any converse, or fellowship with such as lie dead in their sins; nor indeed is it possible, they should have communion with God, till they are washed and sanctified. An unsanctified mind cannot behold him, an unholy will cannot enjoy him, and unholy affections can take no delight or complacency in him. *My brethren,* when persons are called into the state of the favour of God, they are called also unto fellowship with him: Now, *what communion hath light with darkness?* What friendly intercourse can there be, betwixt a God of incomprehensible purity, and such whose spirits are nothing but sinks of filthiness. First you must be made again after the image of God, and so fitted for acquaintance with the most high: for God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and he hateth all the workers of it, *Hab.* 1. 13. *Psal.* 5. 4, 5.

3. *without a principle of grace planted in the heart,*

there

there can be no fruits of new obedience brought forth in the life: which are of indispensable necessity to our getting safe to heaven. Such as are saved by the Lord, must be serviceable unto him; for Christ will judge us hereafter according to our conversations here. *As a man soweth, that he shall also reap*, *Rev.* 2. 23. *Gal.* 6. 7, 8. Now except you be regenerate, you cannot walk in a course of new obedience. First there must be a good treasure in the heart, before it can be productive of what is good in the life. *As the principles are, so the practise will be*; Mat. 12. 33, 34, 35. Besides, God doth judge of mens works and deeds, by the frame of their hearts in the doing of them. He doth search the heart, and try the reins, that he may give to every man according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings, *Jer.* 17. 10.

4. The indispensable necessity of regeneration doth arise, *from the influence it hath to unite a sinner unto Christ*: without having of whom, there is no partaking of life through his bloud. The day of regeneration is the day of espousals, between the Lord Jesus and his people. It is that which helpeth to make the marriage betwixt them: *For if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.

This is *the first Lesson*, I would from hence commend to your study and meditation.

2. Learn from this point of a Believers union with Christ, *What is the influence of faith in the justification of a sinner*; or in what sense it is said to justifie us in the sight of God. Not by any inherent worth and vertue in it self; but because it is the bond that knitteth a sinner to Christ, by the imputation of whose righteousness we are made righte-

quis. If we are justified, it is freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Only the grace of faith is the instrument to bring us unto Christ, and the bond of our union with him, that so we may partake of that redemption, * *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. Faith doth not justifie a sinner, as the hand of a lender, but as the hand of a beggar, * who is enriched by a free gift, which he receiveth with his hand. We are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by virtue of the satisfaction which he hath made; faith only doth knit us *legally* unto Christ, and implant us into him; that we may receive the benefit of that satisfaction, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. *Act.* 13. 39. *Rom.* 5. 1, 9, 10.

* *Sicut enim in deserto serpens aereus in ligno, punctis à serpentibus medebatur, non omnibus sed iis qui in ipsum aspiciebant: Non quod aspectus medicamentum esset, sed quod virtus serpentis per aspectum in iis sanationem operaretur; Ita Christus in cruce exaltatus virtutem passionis suæ in iis exercet qui credunt in ipsum.* Tolet. in Rom. 3.

* *Non ut manus laborantis, sed ut manus mendicantis. Fidem dicimus justificare correlativè, hoc est, per modum instrumenti quod justitiam evangelicam extra nos in Christo constitutam apprehendit, & nobis applicat.* Wendel. system. theol.

2. *Set upon the discharge of those duties, which are upon this account to be discharged.* That is to say,

1. *Bless the Lord for the manifestation of this great mystery*, and that your lot is fallen in such times and places, when and where it is discovered, and set open before your eyes. For, as the Apostle speaketh, *It is a mystery which hath been kept hid from ages*

and generations, but is now made manifest unto his Saints: To whom God would make known, what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, Col. 1. 26, 27, 28.

2. *Adore the condescension and grace of our Lord Jesus*: who was pleased to humble himself to come down to us, that we might be exalted unto a state of oneness with him. Especially if thou art partaker of this grace, how should thy heart be ravished in the contemplation of it? Thou shouldst be ready to cry out with an holy astonishment of Spirit, as *David* in another case, 2 *Sam.* 7. 18. *Who am I, O Lord God, my Redeemer, and my Saviour?* Where is any loveliness in my person? or what have I deserved at thy hands, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

3. *Take heed to your selves, that you do not fall short of this grace and privilege.* Labour every day more and more to clear it up, to the consolation of your hearts, *that you have the Son, by being united unto the Son.* And to that purpose (besides what hath been mentioned already) seriously weigh and ponder these three further *evidential properties* of such as are in Jesus.

1. If you be knit unto Christ, *you will be sharers with him in all his concernments.* You will be affected with his interest and affairs, as if it were your own. If Christ be advanced, it will rejoyce your hearts: and if his name be dishonoured, or his glory be ecclipsed, it will bring trouble and sadness upon your spirits. If you are in Christ, you will

joyn interests with him, and you will have* common friends and enemies with the Lord Jesus. You will be able to say in a measure with *Paul*, it matters not what becomes of my secular concernments, so that Christ be magnified, *Phil.* 1. 20. And with *David*, *The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell upon me.* And in another place, *Do not I hate them that hate thee, O Lord? Am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies*, *Psal.* 139. 21, 22.

* *Amici sunt qui simul lætantur commodis & contristantur adversis: quibus eadem bona & mala sunt; & qui sunt iisdem amici & inimici.*

2. If you are ingrafted into Christ, *you will not walk in any way of ungodliness whatsoever. For whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not*; *i. e.* he doth not sin allowedly and presumptuously, at the rate as wicked men sin. Compare 1 *Joh.* 3. 6. with 2 *Sam.* 22. 22, 23.

3. Lastly, If you are united to the Son of God, *you will not only readily close with his word, but continue stedfast and unmoveable therein unto the end.* Joh. 15. 7. *If you abide in me, and my words abide in you.* 1 *Joh.* 2. 5. *Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: Hereby we know that we are in him.* Whoso keepeth his word] *that is*, he that hideth it as a treasure in his heart; and walketh by the guidance of it in his wayes; and will not part with the word, nor with the way of holiness therein prescribed, notwithstanding all assaults and oppositions of men and devils. *In him verily is the love of God perfected*] *i. e.* then it doth appear to be love of the right kind; and then it hath attained its end, which is the perfection of it: For to this end

is

is the grace of love planted in the hearts of Christs seed, that they may cheerfully obey his word and precepts, and stick close thereunto at all times and seasons. *Hereby we know that we are in him*] that is, If we keep his word, and stedfastly cleave unto Christ, and to the doctrines which he hath taught. For, as it is in the *second Epistle* of *John*, v. 9. *Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.*

Orig. hom. in Gen. cap. 19.

Si vis amplexi, amplectere sapientiam, & dic sapientiam sororem tuam esse; ut & sapientia dicat de te, Qui fecerit voluntatem Patris mei qui est in cœlis, hic meus & frater & soror & mater est. *Quæ sapientia Jesus Christus Dominus noster est: cui est gloria & imperium in sæcula sæculorum.* Amen.

FINIS.

Courteous Reader.

By reason of the *Author's* absence from the *Press*, many *literal mistakes*, and some *errors* in *pointing* have happened, for which a pardon *of course* is expected. Such *Errata* as most disturb or alter the sense are here noted.

Errata.

PAge 2. The *quotation* is by the *Printer* misplaced, p. 6. l. 6. for *either* r. *one*, p. 22. l. 10. for *compare* r. *compari*, p. 38. l. 17. r. *are*, p. 37. l. 25. and in some other places, for *close* r. *close*, p. 40. l. 22. dele *un-* p. 61. l. 17. r. *distinguished*, p. 85. l. 26. r. *into*, p. 94. l. 29. r. *him*, p. 106. in the quotation r. *tentat*, p. 118 l. 2. r. *from*, p. 135. l. 27. dele *q.d.* p. 136 l. 23. r. *Temporary*, p. 137. l. 10. dele *who*: in the quotation r. *testes*, p. 149. l. 8. r. *in both*, l. 26. r. *hanging*: in the quotation r. *unimus*, p. 212. l. 31. r. *naturally*, p. 219. l. 2. & l. 6 for *might* r. *may*, p. 239. l. 17. r. *the*, p. 251. in the quotation r. *tempore*, p. 257. l. 28. r. *exceptions*, p. 263. l. 26. r. *we*, l. 27. r. *him*. p. 277 l. 12. & p. 313. l. 16. r. *principal*, p. 340. l. 14. r. *orderly*, p. 394. l. 7. r. *treat*. p. 396. in the quotation r. *proximus*.

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